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BY

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Author of "The Two Midshipmen," "The Naval Lieutenant," "The Young Commander," "The Lily of Devon," &c.

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OUR BLUE JACKETS,

AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

CHAPTER I.

NORAH was, at Ashgrove, perfectly ignorant of the sad history of the expedition to Santa Cruz, when her brother rushed into her neat little retiring-room, his face flushed, and his eyes sparkling with malicious satisfaction. He held a paper in his hand, and the moment he entered, and Norah looked up from her work, he exclaimed,

"Here's news, Norah—news for me to tell and you to hear."

"What news, Gorman?" she enquired. "You seem elated at it."

"Yes, I think I ought," he returned, in a spiteful tone, "there's an end for ever of that impudent impostor, calling himself an O'More—he's killed or drowned."

Norah felt faint, and became deadly pale. In vain she strove to hide the real anguish she experienced under a calm exterior.

"What!" said her heartless brother, at once perceiving her agitation. "Is it possible that such a fellow as that, calling himself Magnus O'More, can have created an interest in a daughter of Gorman O'More."

"Yes," returned Norah, with a great effort to recover firmness, "Magnus O'More did create an interest, and a deep one, in my feelings, and I scorn to deny it," and the tears rolled down her pale cheeks. "He was a brave and gallant young man, and served his country well; and if he has

fallen in doing his duty—" the words almost choked her, and rising, she precipitately left the chamber.

"Ha!" cried Gorman O'More, pale with rage, "the secret is out; that degenerate girl has dared to love an illegitimate offshoot of the O'Mores. This explains the reason of her refusal of a wealthy baronet. Confound her! It was to bestow her twenty thousand pounds on that nameless adventurer that she refused the baronet, and also snubbed me, by Jove! He's food for fishes, that's one consolation—perhaps now she may think better of Sir James's proposals."

The account in the newspapers of the unsuccessful attempt on Teneriffe, and the names of those brave men who perished there, seemed to afford Mr. and Mrs. O'More infinite satisfaction.

"Well," said Mr. O'More, rubbing his hands, "that troublesome fellow is out of the way. Not that his foolish pretensions were of the slightest consequence to us; still, to have one's name

dragged before the public by a pretended claim to the estates cause unpleasant observations to be made, and create a nine days' wonder."

In the meantime, Norah retired to her room, threw herself on a couch, and, for a few minutes, gave way to grief. "How is this?" she asked herself. "Why this deep feeling and overpowering regret for one, I may say, I hardly knew—pity for his hard and cruel fate first created an interest in him, even before I saw him. Alas! we are strangely constituted beings, and, after all, with but small control over the feelings of our hearts. Many things, from time to time, arose to increase the interest I experienced for that ill-fated youth; his personal appearance and gentle, kind heart added to at interest. Emily Germain's remarks and kind expressions towards the friend of her lover kept him constantly before me. Still, I was little, very little, conscious of the hold he had upon my thoughts, and, I blush to add, upon my heart; and to be

slain in the very flower of his youth!" And, resting her head upon her hands, she wept as she would have wept for an acknowledged lover.

Whilst absorbed in thought, and indulging in her bitter grief, the door of her chamber opened softly, a light step crossed the floor, and Bessy McFarlane sunk on her knees beside her, and was taking her hand, when Norah, roused from her thoughts, started, trembled, and looked at the intruder, but seeing Bessy's eyes filled with tears, her cheeks pale, and her hair disordered under her bonnet, hastily put on, she at once knew that she had heard of the fatal misfortune

"Oh, Miss Norah, what frightful news is this?" and she pulled a newspaper from her bosom. "Christ be good to us! it's not true—it can't be true," and the poor girl sobbed passionately.

Norah exerted all her strength of mind, and, telling Bessy to get up and sit beside her, she took the newspaper, and soon found what she wanted, for it was wet with Bessy's tears. Pale

as a lily, but self-possessed, Norah read slowly and carefully the long narrative of the expedition against Santa Cruz. Then followed the names of the ships, and then the list of the officers killed, and wounded, and missing. Among the last was the name of Lieutenant O'More; then she read a well-written eulogy upon the gallantry and devotion of Lieutenant Templeton and Lieutenant O'More. It stated that the latter and one of the crew of the Terpsichore, named MacFarlane, were the only two left alive on the mole of Santa Cruz. Captain Bowen and his first lieutenant were discovered dead side by side, but Lieutenant O'More was nowhere to be found; and as he was not a prisoner to the Spaniards, it was supposed he had perished in swimming round the point to join Captain Trowbridge, and that his body was swept into the ocean by the currents. Then followed the names of the seamen killed, wounded, and missing belonging to the Terpsichore, MacFarlane's also being amongst the missing.

"There is no certainty of their being dead, Bessy," said Norah, feeling a strange sensation of relief, "they are both missing only."

"Ah, acushla, where one went so went the other. If Mister O'More perished in the sea, so would Phelim. They were both bold swimmers; I have heard poor Phelim say his master was like a fish in the water; he could not be drowned."

"Then the more reason we have for hope, Bessy; it is clear there is no certainty of their death. Numbers, it appears by this paper, were washed ashore drowned and buried on the island; why should it happen that only those two should be missing and their bodies washed out to sea?"

"Oh, Miss Norah, do you really hope? Can there really be hope?" and Bessy, who fondly loved her brother, and who felt perhaps now a stronger feeling for Magnus O'More, such as the Irish and Scotch feel for their hereditary lords, clasped her hands, and looked imploringly into Norah's face.

"Yes, I do hope," returned the young girl; "but, alas! poor Emily," and her tears flowed unrestrainedly, "for her there is no hope. Her gallant lover found a grave in a foreign and distant land. Alas, what a blow she has received! Would that I had been near her!"

For more than an hour Norah and Bessy lamented. Our heroine's young heart was not easily crushed. Whilst there was a shadow of hope she grasped at it, and in the end she infused a like feeling into Bessy's mind.

"When the dinner bell rang, Norah, having in a measure conquered the shock she had received, and exerting all the energy and strength of mind she possessed, proceeded to join the party assembled in the drawing room. Luckily for Norah, there were two guests of her own sex there, and a gentleman from Galway who had been invited to join the family party. Thus she escaped the hints and inuendoes of her brother Gorman, and the sarcasms of her detestable uncle. She was very pale, but quite collected, and though

her mother looked surprised at her paleness, she made no remark. The dinner passed off without any reference to the news of the day, and Norah retired early to her room. She wrote a long and affectionate letter to Emily Germain, saying all that her kind and loving heart dictated.

Two or three weeks elapsed before Norah received an answer. It was early in the day. She was walking up the avenue, her brother Gorman sauntering by her side, saying, as he generally did, something disagreeable, when the post-boy came after them. Gorman stopped him, and opening the bag, took out the letters and looked them over. Norah perceived one from Emily Germain, and anxious to know how her beloved friend bore her cruel bereavement, opened the letter. She had scarcely read three lines, before she trembled with agitation, her colour went and came, and thrusting the letter into her bosom, without finishing it, she looked up, and beheld Gorman's eyes fixed, with a malignant expression, upon her.

"Ah," said he, "you have found it out, have you?"

"What do you mean?" said Norah, firmly; "if you surmise that I have only this moment learned that Commander O'More lives, you are correct. He has returned to England, and has been made a commander. This probably you knew already, for now I recollect, several of the English papers we usually receive, have not reached us."

"Yes, I knew it," returned Gorman, savagely, "and so do your father and mother. But, disgrace to our name as you are, we resolved to leave you in ignorance of this wretched impostor's being still alive. Curse his luck! But if ever he shows himself in this country, I would as soon shoot him as I would a mad dog."

"You give way, Gorman, to evil passions," said Norah, calmly.

"I want none of your sermons," interrupted her brother, passionately, "I had enough of preaching at Holyhead. You have been listening

too often to the conversation of that old heretic, and are but half a Catholic. You have forsaken the faith of your fathers."

"I will listen no longer to your intemperate words, Gorman," interrupted Norah; "my life with you and my wretched uncle, is scarcely bearable; it is time this should end."

"Oh, yes," sneeringly laughed Gorman. "Now you know he is alive, you are ready to jump into his arms—shameless hussy as you are."

Norah turned away, and retraced her steps towards the lake, tears stealing down her cheeks, with the bitterness of heart she felt at the cruel words hurled at her on every opportunity by her spiteful uncle and her unfeeling brother. Her father seldom spoke to her, and her mother invariably in a cold, careless, unlovable tone and manner. Norah longed for Lady Courtown's return to the castle, and resolved, now she was her own mistress, to stay no longer in Ashgrove, but accept Lady Courtown's often-repeated invitation to come and reside with her.

As she passed out through the lodge gate, intending to stroll along the lake and finish the reading of the letter that had raised such strange and unusual emotions in her heart, she beheld Bessy McFarlane coming up the road with hasty steps. Norah had just taken out her letter, but on seeing Bessy, refrained from reading it, whose flushed face and agitated manner, convinced her that she had heard the glad tidings as well as herself.

"Oh, Miss Norah," exclaimed Bessy, her eyes sparkling, and her cheeks like full-blown pæonies, "they are alive! the blessed saints in glory be glorified and praised!" and Bessy devoutly crossed herself. "You were right. Alanna, I have had a letter from Phelim; they are in England. Not only alive and well, but Phelim says his master has been made a commander. He says he won't tell us a word of how they escaped, but keep it all till he comes home. Oh, the Blessed Virgin make me thankful and grateful! and in truth, Miss Norah, for this

blessed news, I'll give Father Mahony all my savings for the last three months, and as many wax candles as will light the chapel on Christmas Eve as it was never lighted before."

Norah smiled; her heart, despite her troubles, felt relieved of a great weight.

"I am very thankful, indeed, Bessy, to hear of your brother's and Mr. O'More's safety; you shall add my gift to yours for Father Mahony, to be distributed among the poor and needy of his parish. The worthy priest rates me soundly for not going to confession, but he gives me his blessing none the less."

"Ah, Miss Norah, he says you are an angel for all that; but," and Betty's face again wore a smile.

"But what, Bessy?"

Bessy looked down, and said, "the worthy father thinks you are an angel, but one of the fallen ones, for he is sure you will in the end become a Protestant."

Norah looked serious, but replied,

"Father Mahony may be right as to my

becoming a Protestant; but he should not call those fallen who believe differently to himself. Now tell me, Bessy, where was your brother, when he wrote to you?"

"In Plymouth, Miss Norah; both were aboard the Terpsichore. He says his master fought a terrible fight with two ships of the enemy—took one and sunk the other, and that he was made a commander for that and his previous services. Phelim expects to be home in a fortnight, and his master also intends visiting this part of the country, and—"

Again Bessy McFarlane hesitated, and looked down.

"Indeed, Bessy," said Norah, who very plainly saw that the young girl had some further communication to make. "You need not fear to tell me all your news. Why do you hesitate?"

"For fear, darling, that I might distress you," returned the farmer's daughter.

"Still I would rather hear it, than be left to imagine perhaps worse news," returned Norah.

"The saints forbid, alanna, that you should imagine evil tidings. You know Mr. O'More was anxious to discover his mother's family, and to prove himself the lawful son of your uncle Roderick O'More. Well, miss, he has seen his grandfather and grandmother, and was acknowledged by them, and has got all the papers and documents necessary to prove his mother's marriage. That's all Phelim says about the matter."

Norah's colour heightened; with all her wish that Magnus O'More should clear his mother's name from reproach, she felt grieved when she considered that could only be done by depriving her father of the entire O'More estates.

Bessy read these feelings in the face of Norah as she would a book.

"But, dear heart," said Bessy, taking her hand and pressing it fondly, "don't for a moment think that Mr. Magnus O'More, with his noble, kind heart, would do anything to cause you to grieve, or shed a tear. Ah, he has never forgotten you through all these long years."

Norah felt that she coloured to the temples, and her heart beat faster, as she said, her voice a little faltering,

"Does Magnus O'More communicate his thoughts to your brother?"

"No, miss," said Bessy McFarlane, firmly, "but he has done so to me, and has written to me. Ah, my own heart, for you know you are," and the devoted girl repeatedly kissed the hand she held, "You know I have loved this brave youth from his earliest childhood; the dream of my youth has been to see him righted, and in my dreams of after years, you, alanna, have been present, and by his side, and through you, whom I always dreamed would be his bride, I hoped to heal the wounds inflicted by your father, and that peace might be established amongst you all by this dear hand becoming the prize of the noble O'More —you are not angry, darling, with poor Bessy for daring to dream such dreams?"

"Angry," repeated Norah, with fervour, and putting her arm round Bessy's neck she kissed

her affectionately; "no, no, dear Bessy; but though this is a retired place, we had better separate now. You have given me intelligence that will employ many hours of thought. Farewell; to-morrow, or the next day, I will pay you a visit. Would to God I could save my family from misfortune, for a terrible blow it would be to them to lose the estates, which I fear they must do if Commander O'More proves his mother's marriage. My portion, at all events, shall be theirs. I would not for worlds keep it from them, but now good-bye, Bessy." And they separated.

Norah, as she proceeded towards the mansion, taxed her own heart severely; first, for having allowed herself to become prepossessed in favour of a man she scarcely knew, and who might never entertain the same feeling for herself. Secondly, this young man was an object of hatred to all her family. He had suffered great cruelty from her uncle and father. Could she ever ex-

pect, supposing he did evince an attachment for her, the consent or approbation of her father.

Norah blamed herself severely and unjustly, for permitting Magnus O'More to occupy so much of her thoughts; but the very kindness of her heart, and her love of truth and justice had led to the results she deplored.

On reaching her room she sat down to read poor Emily Germain's letter. Its contents caused her to shed unrestrained tears, for the gentle bereaved maiden had poured out all the feelings of her heart to one she loved so well.

"I have not the power, beloved friend," wrote Miss Germain, "to touch upon any subject but that one so dear to my heart. My noble, brave-hearted Templeton fell beside his gallant commander, upon the mole of Santa Cruz. The lion-hearted O'More lived over that terrible day, and took, at George's request (for he foresaw his doom), my miniature from his breast, where it rested, pressed by his-death clasp, and whence

Lieutenant O'More removed it. Ah, Norah, if ever man deserved your gentle heart, Magnus O'More does. I can write no more at present. When time soothes the wound inflicted, you shall hear from me again."

After some few remarks upon the same subject, Emily ended her melancholy epistle.

Norah sat for some time wrapt in thought. Many were the ideas that crowded and confused her brain, till with a sigh she heard the dinner bell, and thought how happy she should be to be left in the solitude of her own chamber, instead of joining the worldly-minded, and, she grieved to think, heartless party assembled in the drawing-room.

CHAPTER II.

To Norah's intense vexation and surprise, not having heard a word about it from any of the family, about six or eight days after the events recorded in our last chapter, Sir James Boriden arrived at Ashgrove on a sporting visit, bringing with him his dogs and horses. She had observed that preparations were making for guests, but she never imagined that her *ci-devant* suitor was to be one amongst them. She did not meet Sir James till half-an-hour before descending to dinner. He returned her salutation with perfect self-possession, congratulated her on her restoration to health, imputed it to her native air; spoke of the beauty of the situation of the man-

sion, the lovely scenery of the lake, and seemed to make himself completely at home; but did not devote any particular attention to her, being alike gay with the several young ladies who were come to spend a week at Ashgrove, and handed down to dinner a Miss Lynch, a vain frivolous girl, the belle of Galway at that time.

During dinner the conversation of the gentlemen turned upon the troubled state of the country. Sir James treated the designs of the united Irishmen with ridicule, and said England was quite aware of their doings, and was willing to let them go a-head a little, just to give them a lesson that would teach them sense. As to himself he really would like to see Paddy in his green uniform, fighting on his own sod. There was a Mr. O'Kelly, a Catholic gentleman of good family and fortune, seated next Norah, with whom he appeared very much pleased. It was his first visit to Ashgrove. He looked up on hearing Sir James's contemptuous manner of speaking of Ireland and the Irish, and very quietly said,

"Perhaps, Sir James, you may have an opportunity, sooner than you imagine, of beholding a Paddy fighting on his own soil."

"The sooner the better, sir," returned Sir James, with a small touch of sarcasm in his tone.

Mr. O'Kelly merely nodded his head, and turning to Miss O'More said,

"I hope you do not think me a United Irishman, but it is not pleasant to hear your countrymen, though united together in a bad cause, turned into contempt, especially by an Englishman."

Norah knew that Sir James was considered a notorious duellist, and had also heard that he was a most perfect marksman; but she only replied,

"I feel as you do, Mr. O'Kelly, that it is not pleasant to hear our country contemptuously spoken of; but Sir James Boriden made those remarks thoughtlessly, and with no probable meaning." She then turned the conversation.

The next day the gentlemen went out hunting, and the ladies drove or rode to see the hunt. Thus a week passed over without any particular event taking place. There was to be the hunt ball in Galway in another week, and all the visitors in Ashgrove were preparing for this long-looked-for fête.

Norah received, to her infinite joy, a letter from Lady Courtown, saying that she was to leave Dublin that day for the castle, and earnestly entreated her to come over on the following Thursday, and remain some time with her.

Mrs. O'More was at this time planning a marriage between her son Gorman, and the wealthy heiress of the Garistown estates. Miss Martin was invited to spend the week before the ball at Ashgrove, and when Norah mentioned to her mother that she intended going to Courtown Castle on the Thursday, she said coldly,

"Oh, very well, it just suits me; I want your rooms for Miss Martin; you need not hurry your return. Is there any chance of that sickly

boy recovering? He has lasted longer than the doctor imagined."

On the Thursday all the gentlemen left early to join a meeting of the hunt at Squire Arthur's, of Glenhanlan, and the ladies went shopping, to Galway.

Norah had lent her favourite pony to Miss Lynch, and determined, as it was a remarkably fine day, and a nice breeze blowing, to proceed to Courtown in the pleasure boat, with her own maid, Susan. Mary ordered the boat to be ready: she stepped on board, taking the two steady boatmen with her, who always attended when the boat was required.

"It's a fine morning entirely, miss, glory be to God!" said one of the men, settling the cushions, and taking the helm, as his comrade hoisted the sail.

"It is a fine morning, indeed, James," answered Norah, "and we have a very favourable breeze."

"Yes, Miss Norah; it's a sodger's breeze—

good to go and come back," and away dashed the light boat over the tranquil waters of Lough Corrib.

Though it was a favourable breeze, the sun bright, and the waters sparkling, it nevertheless came off the shore at times in smart squalls, as it often does on lakes. Lake sailing always requires care. Norah loved the water, and delighted in boating excursions. It would only require an hour and a-half to reach the castle. She had sent off a note the preceding evening to Lady Courtown, saying she was coming the next day by water.

On flew the boat, heeling a good deal to the breeze at times, but creating no other sensation to Norah but that of pleasure, as the mimic spray sprang over the boat's bows. The lake between Ashgrove and Courtown was about three miles wide, with a bend in the shore on approaching the castle, where the land rose considerably, and was covered with a fine grove of trees. They were within four hundred yards of Courtown Quay,

directly under the castle, when one of the men stepped forward to lower the fore-sail. The main sheet was thoughtlessly left fast, and at that moment a violent squall rushing over the castle cliffs, struck the boat, ere the man at the helm could see the danger the boat heeled, filled, and turned completely over, a fearful scream escaping Susan's lips, as she and her mistress were immersed in the water.

When Norah saw the boat heel so suddenly, she knew it would upset, and with uncommon presence of mind, she seized one of the long oars, and the next moment she was thrown into the lake, blinded, and for the moment bewildered, though still grasping the oar. Norah strove to get the oar under her breast, but could not. She certainly would have perished, but, standing on the quay and watching the boat, was a tall, fine-looking young man, in the undress attire of a naval officer.

"Ha! by Jove, she will go over!" he exclaimed, "the sheet's fast!" and instantly

kicking off his shoes, and throwing his coat on the ground, he plunged into the water, swimming with exceeding rapidity. He soon reached the spot where the occurrence had taken place. The boat was bottom-up. The man, who went forward to lower the foresail, was underneath, no doubt, entangled in the sail or under one of the thwarts. He was a good swimmer, but the other man could not swim a stroke; nevertheless, he was cool and strong man, not easily frightened. With one hand he grasped the rudder of the boat, and at the same time seized Susan's garments; she was close by him. By a powerful effort he got upon the boat's bottom, dragging up the nearly drowned girl, and then, half distracted, he looked round for his young mistress. But the stranger, who had by this time reached the spot, was alongside Norah, who still struggled to get on the oar, but was rapidly becoming exhausted, when a voice, hearty in its tones, reached her ear, saying, "Courage, Norah, dear Norah; I am here," and the next instant a hand

was under her chest. She was placed on the oar, and her drooping head held clear of the water; her bonnet was off, and her long luxuriant hair unloosed. She had not lost her senses, for she heard the words spoken by the stranger; and as he gently pushed the hair from her face, she let her gaze fall upon him, who, partly supporting her, kept pushing the oar to the shore. In the meantime, the alarm spread ashore, several men ran down to the quay, launched the Castle boat, and pulled out to the rescue.

"Thank God!" exclaimed the stranger, "you are safe. Dear Norah, this is the happiest moment of my life."

Norah heard the words—even recognised her preserver; but was too overpowered—too weak after her struggles, to speak.

"Gently, men, gently," called out Magnus O'More, for he it was, as the men in the boat pulled eagerly towards them, and then, with their assistance, Norah was lifted into the boat, and laid upon the stern sheets, O'More

watching every movement, whilst the boat pulled towards the upset pleasure barge. By the time they had reached her, Tom Curtis, the man under the boat, had extricated himself, and came to the surface—he was accounted the best swimmer and diver on the shores of the lake—his feet had got entangled in the fore sheet; but getting at his knife, and holding his breath, he freed himself, dived, and came up, to the great delight of his comrade.

"Jem, Jem, for heaven's sake, say where is our young mistress!" were his first words.

"Safe, old fellow, safe, the Lord be praised!"

In a few moments the boat, with all saved, reached the shore. Norah was shivering with the cold, and totally unable to speak or walk; but Magnus O'More sprang ashore, lifted her in his arms as he would a child, pushed through the group of eager and terrified domestics, who carried cloaks, shawls, and everything they thought might be wanted, and advanced towards the Castle, at a pace that puzzled the domestics to

keep up with him. Entering the hall, he encountered Lady Courtown.

"Ah, my God!—my darling Norah!" she exclaimed, clasping the dripping form in her arms. "Heaven be praised she is saved! This way, Mr. O'More, this way," and she passed up the stairs, followed by her female attendants, and throwing open a bed-room door, Magnus O'More entered, and laid his charge on the bed. Norah's eyes rested on him as he relinquished his hold, she did not speak; but Magnus O'More never forgot that look. He left her to the care of Lady Courtown and her attendants. As he quitted the room, he encountered her ladyship's butler.

"This way, sir," said Mr. Gilman, "here is a chamber. You must remove your garments instantly; I can give you a complete change."

"Thank you, Gilman, thank you," said our hero, entering the room.

"There are plenty of garments," said the butler, opening a wardrobe; "if you will just slip into bed, I will air the linen."

"Into bed!" exclaimed O'More, laughing. "Bless me, Mr. Gilman, you forget that a sailor is a kind of amphibious animal—not always comfortable on land, but quite at home in the water."

"Dear me, sir; consider the cold." And the worthy butler kept airing the linen before a roaring fire, as O'More pulled off his wet garments.

"Just send for my coat, waistcoat, and shoes; they are all dry. I kicked them off before plunging in."

"True, sir; I will get them for you in a few minutes, and just give the linen an air before the fire."

"Well," soliloquised Magnus; "this is a strange adventure, and he gazed out from the window, seeing several persons coming up to the house with poor Susan, who was crying and sobbing with fright and cold."

"Ah, the poor girl," he continued; "her escape was providential; she was saved by a man

who has no more idea of swimming than a stone, but he has a cool head, and that's a good thing."

Mr. Gilman returned with a tray laden with wine and brandy, and bringing the aired linen and our hero's garments.

"Take a glass of brandy, sir; it's a capital thing, after such a dip as you have had. Miss Norah, God bless her! is coming to nicely; she will be as well as ever before dinner."

"Better change, sir," continued the butler, as our hero swallowed a glass of brandy; and, in a few minutes, accepting the offered linen, Magnus resumed his garments, and felt as if he had only been taking a pleasant bath.

"I trust, sir, you will be nothing the worse," said the butler.

"Not the least in the world, Mr. Gilman; we should make very bad sailors if a slight immersion in such fine weather as this would injure us."

"I am sure my lady will be glad to hear it; she was awfully alarmed; we saw Miss Norah

coming, for we know the pleasure boat, and her ladyship expected her. It was so singularly fortunate that you happened to be on the quay."

"I saw the boat coming, myself," said our hero; "as I was walking along the borders of the lake, and I noticed she heeled over to the squalls that blew out very suddenly from the land, and knowing how careless, in general, boatmen on lakes are with the sheets, I sauntered down to the water-side watching her."

"Ah, the saints be praised, you did; but please, sir, come to the fire in the drawing-room."

Magnus followed the butler, full of thought and reflection, into the blue drawing-room of Courtown Castle. As he was entering the apartments, the young heir, a very handsome and lively looking child, was leaving it with his attendant, who had an infant of eight or ten months old in her arms. The little boy looked earnestly at Magnus, who, stooping down, kissed him. Some persons have a charm for en-

gaging the attention of childhood, and children also have their peculiar likings and dislikings for persons even at first sight. Little Francis, the moment Magnus kissed him, and asked him would he come to him, jumped up in his arms, and looking him eagerly in his face, said; "You are not my dear papa, come back again, are you."

"No, my child," said Magnus; "but henceforth I am to be as a papa to you, and I will love you if you will love me."

"And will you play with me?" said the child, joyfully.

"Most willingly."

"Oh, then," said the boy; "I am so glad; I must go and get my playthings; I have had no one to play with this long time."

"You will be a trouble to the gentleman," said the attendant.

"Not at all," replied Magnus; "if you will leave him with me?"

Before ten minutes had expired the boy was in raptures with his new companion; and was sit-

ting on his knee, listening to something Magnus was telling him, with delighted attention, as Lady Courtown entered the room.

"Under Providence, Mr. O'More," said Lady Courtown, taking the chair our hero placed for her, "you have been the preserver of my cherished Norah. I shall never forget the agony I suffered when I saw the boat go over."

"You are looking pale and frightened still, Lady Courtown," he answered. "I hope Miss O'More is none the worse for the alarm."

"Norah is not a girl of weak nerves," said Lady Courtown. "She was a little exhausted, but very little frightened, if indeed at all. She will be quite able to join us this evening. I have sent off a man on horseback to Ashgrove, to let them know the facts, and that Norah is doing well. Ill news travels fast, and they might hear a wrong version of the affair."

"Such is generally the case," observed Magnus.

"My little Francis," went on her ladyship,

"seems to have taken a most particular fancy to you; he is looking as earnestly at you as if he had seen you before."

"He says, mamma," said the child, "that he will play with me,—I have such a lot of pretty things to shew you," he added, looking at our hero. "What shall I call you?"

"Magnus," returned our hero. "Will you remember that name."

"Magnus," repeated the boy; "oh, yes, I will remember. I will go now and bring you my new game."

"You will tire of him, Mr. O'More," observed her ladyship, as the boy ran out of the room. "Do not you think he looks healthy and strong? To my eyes, there are no remains of the delicate appearance he had a year ago. I was very unhappy; the doctors spoke so very positively."

"They are not infallible, your ladyship, fortunately. In my opinion, the child has the look of good health, and will assuredly improve daily."

"Let me ask you how you intend proceeding

with respect to your own rights. You told me this morning, just before we were interrupted by the visit of the Lynches, that for the sake of Norah, you wish to settle the affair in the most amicable manner."

"Most certainly; for the sake of your beautiful and amiable young friend, I do not wish to disturb Mr. O'More in his possession of Ashgrove, without giving him an equivalent, to enable him to continue as nearly his present style of living as possible. Thanks to my Lord Courtown's bounty and munificent bequest, I can do so without any great sacrifice. I must, however, clearly substantiate my claim publicly, to rescue my beloved mother and father's name from reproach."

"Unquestionably it is your duty to do so," said Lady Courtown, "but I regret to say, from my knowledge of Mr. O'More's character, I think it most likely he will give you every possible opposition. He is greatly guided by the advice of two very bad men, Mr. George Hamilton, his brother-

in-law, and Mr. McGrab, his solicitor, as dangerous a little fellow as ever existed. Mr. Gordon, my solicitor, a most conscientious honourable man as any in the profession, will be here to-morrow, and you can consult him on the best means of proceeding, so as, if possible, to avoid useless exposure. You have not been able to trace that man named Jack Muggins, I believe."

"Not yet," returned our hero. "By-and-bye, I daresay, if he lives, my faithful follower, McFarlane, will be able to find him."

"There is an English baronet, a Sir James Boriden, staying at Ashgrove," remarked Lady Courtown. "He proposed for Norah a year ago, when the family were in England, but she most decidedly refused his proposals. Since then her life has been truly miserable at home. I wish the dear girl to live here; she is now her own mistress, and I am sure it would be an immense relief to her. Her uncle Hamilton is a most detestable man, and for some reason or other, he rules the family, and dislikes her."

"He's a man capable of any outrage," remarked O'More. "I remember him well, and the misery he inflicted on me when I was a child. Do you think, Lady Courtown, that Norah could be persuaded to undertake the office of mediator between me and my uncle O'More."

"We will put the question to her, if she is sufficiently recovered to join us this evening," answered Lady Courtown.

CHAPTER III.

We will now resume the narrative of Lieutenant O'More's adventures, after his escape from the Island of Teneriffe, up to the period of his appearance at Courtown Castle.

Having completely disabled the boat filled with the enraged Spaniards, and forced them to return ashore, Magnus and his assistant turned their attention to their own situation. The boat was going dead before the wind, the sky overcast, but the sea smooth, the breeze blowing over the island.

"Look in the cuddy forehead," said the lieutenant to Phelim; "and see if you can find a compass, or any kind of provisions; there are no

stars to be seen; if there are no provisions it will be scarcely wise to attempt a run for Madeira. If we missed the island, or thick weather turned up, and no vessel came across our course, we should have a good chance of starving."

"Faix, sir, that would be worse than fighting those rascally Spaniards, and eating them afterwards. I'll soon see if there's any grub. It's quite clear those ruffians intended to kill us; this is not a boat they were likely to give us, for it has nets and fishing gear, and if there's no provisions it's clearer still," and Phelim dived into the cuddy and commenced a strict investigation of the two lockers it contained; but nothing in the shape of food or drink could he discern. He found an old compass box with a good compass inside; this he brought out to his master.

"Ha! this is fortunate," opening and setting the compass.

"Be gor, sir, we can't eat it, nevertheless; and devil a taste of any kind of grub or drink is there."

"Can't we try and catch some fish," said the lieutenant, looking at the compass, "and, take a pull at the sheet, Phelim; we must alter our course, I think it will rain as the day makes. I hope the wind will not shift; we can just take our course north-east."

"Faith, sir, I had better try for some fish; it's a long drift net with corks."

"We must lower our sail then," said our hero, "for we should otherwise tear the net to pieces. We are too close to the island now, and might be seen and pursued, when the sun rises."

Accordingly, having altered their course, they ran on till daylight, when a heavy shower of rain set in, promising to last. Phelim busied himself in catching the rain as it ran off the little deck, over the cuddy into a bucket, and finding two jars in the locker he filled them.

"Come," observed Lieutenant O'More, "that's something; but the wind is scant, we are a couple of points off our course. We can still see the great peak, towering to the sky. Suppose you

lower away and have a couple of hours' drift. I see land away to our right,—that's one of the islands, and there's a lateen craft to our left. She's either a fishing or passage boat, no doubt, from one island to the other."

"Faith, sir, let us speak her; we could board and take her. We have our arms, and they are sure to be without any. It's much surer than fishing."

"It's not a bad idea," said our hero; "just slack our sheet, and we'll run alongside her. Now I look at her she's lying to, and no doubt those aboard are fishermen."

The weather was clearing, and the sun coming out. As they ran down for the boat, which was considerably larger than their own, having two masts, Phelim brought his weapons out; but the pistols were quite unserviceable, their immersion having destroyed the powder. They had their cutlasses, however, ready, and their clothes were getting dry. As they neared

the boat they perceived she contained five men and a lad, and that they had nets out.

On their approach the Spaniards seemed to regard them with great curiosity, but luffing up alongside Magnus O'More hailed the men, and asked them if they had any provisions on board they would sell.

"Why, carambo!" said one of the men, "is not that boat Pedro Gomez's craft? How's this? Who are you?"

"This boat may be Pedro Gomez's," said Lieutenant O'More; "but that's of no consequence. If you have provisions or fish I will give you half-a-dozen Spanish dollars for them. Do you belong to Teneriffe?"

"No; we belong to Gomera."

"Well, let us have some food, and you shall have ten times its worth."

"Well, come alongside," said the men, after consulting together for a few minutes.

Lieutenant O'More slacked his sheet and ran

up alongside, the wind being light and no sea on. The moment they came alongside, the men on board made her fast, saying fiercely,

"You have stolen this boat, whoever you are —you are not natives of these islands; we'll take you to Gomera."

"Not exactly," replied Lieutenant O'More, with a smile, while Phelim burst into a laugh, saying in English,

"Bedad, my lads, you have got into a mess," and both seized their cutlasses and pistols, though the latter were useless, and sprung into the other boat.

This sudden act, and the full view of two such powerful men as our hero and Phelim armed, perfectly astonished the fishermen; who, however, seized anything at hand to defend themselves, the boy diving into the cabin out of the way. It was a very short contest. Our hero did not wish to wound the men, so a few blows with the flat of the cutlass, a pistol presented at their heads, and a tremendous blow from Phelim's

fist, which he preferred to using a weapon against unarmed men, made them rush into the other boat with wonderful alacrity, and an astonishing number of oaths. Bundling the man, Phelim had knocked senseless, after the others, the boy in abject terror falling into the water, from which Phelim fished him up, they cut the two boats adrift as well as the nets, slacked their sheets and stood away from the baffled and furious Spaniards, who cursed them as pirates and robbers; but felt quite satisfied that it would be in vain to attempt to retake their boat.

"By St. Patrick, sir, we have made a capital exchange; here's fish without the trouble of catching them, and a snug caboose to cook them in. She's a fine lump of a boat."

"All's fair in war," said our hero. "I am sorry to take the boat, but it's their own fault."

The men in the other boat were busy, in the midst of their misfortunes, in regaining their nets, which were valuable, the corks buoying them up.

Gomera was scarcely ten miles off, so there was no fear of their not reaching that island.

"Now, Phelim," said our hero, "have a look at our larder after this change of crafts; that's a good roomy cuddy."

"Aye, aye, sir," returned Phelim, highly delighted with their capture. "Here's plenty of fish;" and entering the cuddy, for though considerably a larger and finer boat, she was only half-decked, he soon returned bringing out a bag of biscuits, a large jar of wine, and some baccalao. "Here's enough, sir, for a week, and not bad stuff either."

"If we do not get a shift of wind it will take us longer than a week to get to Madeira," said Magnus; "but now, Phelim, fry some of the fish, or boil them, as we have no fat."

Having made a tolerable breakfast of fish and biscuit, and a small quantity of wine to wash them down, Lieutenant O'More gave the helm to Phelim, and turned in for a few hours' sleep.

It was sunset when our hero awoke and per-

ceived by the motion of the boat that there was a good deal of wind and sea, and on leaving the cuddy he saw that the boat was scudding before a strong and fair breeze, and with more canvas than she could well bear. He looked at the compass, for there was an exceedingly good one on board. Another meal of fish and biscuit, and then the sails were lowered, a couple of reefs taken in each, and only one hoisted for the night. Our hero insisted on Phelim's turning in for some hours. The sky boded a good deal of wind when our hero took the helm, and as the moon broke through a heavy mass of clouds the breeze increased and the sea also; but the boat was an able sea boat and though open from the foremast aft, was capable of standing a great deal of weather.

It was a lonely watch, and our hero, as he sat steering and watching the seas, as they tumbled and foamed, and threw their spray at times over the low stern, was very busy with his thoughts, which were for the most part painful. His lost

friend Templeton, and his gallant captain, were ever present. He thought how terrible would be the pang inflicted on the gentle heart of Emily Germain. He frequently thought of Templeton's dreams, and how strangely his own and Captain Bowen's death corresponded with them. His own death, no doubt, would be reported; and he asked himself was there one heart that would grieve for him; and then he thought, as he often had done latterly, of his beautiful cousin, Norah—would she shed a tear at his supposed death? Norah had made a very much stronger impression on his heart than he at first imagined, and this feeling instead of weakening with time greatly increased,—his admiration for the fair Spaniard, Donna Maria, had made but a very trifling impression, and had faded away almost immediately; but Norah's sweet face, never—in the hour of strife, in solitude—her fair image rose before him.

"Can I pain her gentle heart," he soliloquised, "by driving her parents from a home, though a home unjustly held; yet—my beloved mother's

fame—I must clear, if God spares me;" and he looked around him at the frail craft that held him, careering over a rough and stormy sea,—at the dark clouds driving fearfully quick across a portentous looking moon,—he became roused from his train of thoughts; and, calling out to Phelim, roused him from his slumbers.

"The Lord be good to us, sir! I was dreaming that I was in ould Ireland, and that I had shot a great, thundering big rebel, who held Miss Norah in his grasp, and was going to fling her into a mass of fire—the Lord bless us! I'm all over in a profuse perspiration."

"Lower away the sail—quick, Phelim, quick! The old Storm King is upon us."

It was too late, a sheet of spray like a vast snow drift came tearing over the breaking seas—it covered the boat—the next instant the sail was flying out in ribbons, and the boat buried in a whirlwind of spray and foam. Phelim lowered the yard, and with difficulty secured it. The boat took in a great deal of water, so much so

that they feared for a moment that she would founder;—the sky became overcast, and of a dense and appalling blackness. At length flashes of vivid lightning and peals of thunder rolled over the deep in one continued peal, the flashes lighting up the foaming seas with its blue lurid glare, whilst the storm raged unabated. Our hero kept the boat dead before the tempest, and Phelim with a bucket strove to free her from the seas she took in.

For three anxious hours they thought she would go down, so tremendous became the sea. Relieving Phelim our hero worked hard with the bucket, till at length the sky cleared along the horizon, and the storm swept onwards, leaving a strong gale blowing and a heavy breaking sea. Lieut. O'More found it necessary to hoist a small portion of sail on the main-mast to lift the boat out of the seas, and, providentially, the wind now shifted a point, or their situation would have been hopeless. As the morning dawned the gale moderated, and, before

the sun was an hour old, the sky had cleared splendidly to windward, the huge dark masses of clouds banking down to leeward.

Our two voyagers began to breathe again, and, lashing the helm, they set to in earnest to clear the boat of all the water; having done this, they shifted the after-sail forward, and, taking in all the reefs, hoisted it.

"We have had a night of it, Phelim," said O'More, taking off his jacket and spreading it to dry in the strong glare of a burning sun, the breeze still being strong but steady, and the sea changing into the long mountain roll of the Atlantic.

"Faith, sir! I thought our log was run," said Phelim; "it blew as hard for three hours as ever I saw it. This is far from being a bad boat; the other would have gone down to a certainty."

"I hope the owners reached Gomera before the tempest caught them—they were only ten miles from it when we left them, and those fishermen are well up to the signs of the weather.

I thought there was something brewing from the great heat, the look of the moon, and the shifting of the wind during the day."

"Glory be to God! we have escaped Davy's locker this time, sir; there's a chance now of making Madeira before another break of the weather. Bedad! our fish have had a good washing, anyhow—a change into a frying-pan will improve them."

Before twelve o'clock there was only a pleasant breeze blowing, a bright, glorious sky, and the long mountain swell remaining during the day. They beheld several ships in the distance, working to windward—two large vessels scudding under their courses, with loss of all but their lower masts.

"If this wind lasts," said O'More, "we shall sight Madeira to-morrow."

"Our wine is falling short, sir, and so is our biscuit; we have only enough for twenty-four hours."

"Better make it do for forty-eight, for fear of a shift of wind."

That day passed and a tranquil night, and the first thing that saluted their sight the next morning was the island of Madeira—distant not more than twenty miles.

"Come, this is a very fair run, indeed," said our hero, after a four hours' sleep, and turning out to enjoy the mild delicious air of the climate of Madeira.

In four hours they were rounding the land and making for the port of Funchal; just as they gained a sight of the bay, the loud boom of a man-of-war's gun pealed over the deep.

Both our voyagers started up, gazed eagerly into the bay, and then McFarlane, with a wild cheer of exultation, exclaimed "Hurrah! there's the jolly old Terpsichore."

Tears were in the lieutenant's eyes, as they rested almost entranced upon the hull of the dear old ship. He could not for a moment utter a

word; her topsails and topgallant sails were set; the signal for sailing was up, and her anchor tripped. A man-of-war brig was also getting under weigh; and just as the boat stretched across the bay, she wore round, her topsails filled, and her head was turned seaward.

"An hour later; ah, even twenty minutes, and we should have missed her," said Magnus O'More; "we shall just cross under her forefoot."

In less than twenty minutes they were within hail of the Terpsichore; they could see she had had new topmasts and topgallant masts, and standing up in the boat, Lieutenant O'More, when within ten yards, hailed the ship.

There was a rush of men to the side, an officer on the quarter deck was directing his glass upon the boat, when suddenly a loud and hearty cheer, such as British tars alone can give, rung through the air, and then gracefully rounding to, the topsails were thrown aback, and in a few minutes the Terpsichore was lying as steady and as calm as if held by her anchors.

A few minutes more, and O'More and Phelim stood upon her deck.

Our hero might well, in after years, recollect his reception on board his old ship, with pride and satisfaction; it showed the love sailors will always feel for a kind and deserving officer. For half-an-hour the crew was in a state of bewilderment, Phelim's arms were nearly rung off, for he was the favourite of the forecastle, and all his old comrades welcomed him as one from the tomb.

The Spanish boat was cast adrift, no one caring what became of it, the topsails were braced round, the brig signalled, and again the gallant frigate turned her head seaward. Whilst this was taking place, all the officers, with our hero, descended into the cabin. There were only two strange officers on board, one a first lieutenant of the ———, who had the temporary command of the ship, and a Lieutenant Thorp, to replace poor Templeton, the third lieutenant replacing our hero as second lieutenant.

Wine and refreshments were placed on the table, and all eagerly listened to the narrative of our hero's adventures.

"By Jove! Magnus," said Lieutenant Eaton, formerly the third lieutenant of the Terpsichore, "You had a most wonderful escape on the mole at Santa Cruz. You and your man McFarlane were all that escaped alive, excepting the three men found under the pier head, who were much hurt getting ashore, and were unable to advance along the mole; and again, your escape from those rascally Spaniards was touch-and-go. What a mess that affair turned out. You have been returned as dead, and your friends will be mourning you, and now you are all right."

"I am happy to say I am," replied our hero; "but how comes the Terpsichore here; where's Captain Trowbridge, and Nelson, and the ships, and whither are you bound?"

"I'll tell you how it occurred," said Lieutenant Eaton. "In a tremendous squall, some thirty or forty miles to the south east of Madeira, we lost

our topmast and topgallant mast, sprung a leak, and in the same tempest, followed by a dense fog, we lost sight of the rest of the ships, so we steered for Madeira to repair damages, and as our rendezvous is Gibraltar, we are bound there, with the Grappler brig in company. You will find all your things safe, and your cabin just as you left it. You will take your old place in the frigate till we reach Gibraltar."

"No," answered Magnus. "I will not disturb the present arrangements till we reach Gibraltar, which we shall do in a few days; till then I will be a passenger."

CHAPTER IV.

THE Terpsichore was not destined to reach Gibraltar in a few days. When within forty or fifty miles of the Straits, she encountered heavy breezes from the eastward, which rapidly increased, and became a heavy gale blowing from that point. Though the Terpsichore was a beautiful working frigate, she could not make head against the easterly gales and singularly heavy sea.

For eight days she remained, making no progress, sometimes lying-to. On the ninth morning, the wind and sea began moderating, when two large ships were discovered, coming before the wind, and in a very short time they were clearly made out to be French—one a frigate of the first

class, the other a very fine corvette of five and twenty guns.

There was a slight hesitation in the temporary commander of the Terpsichore as to what he should do, for he was certainly exceedingly overmatched. For several days before, they had lost sight of the brig. But the crew showed every sign of wishing to engage the two vessels, and our hero's opinion being asked, he cheerfully said, "Fight them, by all means, I will take my post as third lieutenant."

The Terpsichore was then kept away for a while, and all the usual preparations made for action.

There was a secret wish amongst the men that Magnus O'More should take the command. No man after her late captain knew how to work the ship as well as he did. He had seen a great deal of service, was known to be very skilful, and as bold as a lion; whilst the commander, though a brave officer, had seen but little active service, and was what was called a very prudent officer.

Accustomed to the late commander's dashing and spirited manner of going into action, all on board waited most anxiously for the commencement of the strife, to see how their dear old ship would be brought into action.

The French frigate and her consort, having reduced their sails, came gallantly up, evidently intending to make a very short affair of it, for the French frigate carried more guns, and sixty more men, than the Terpsichore.

From some cause or other the commander of the Terpsichore* lost a great advantage, by going about when he should have stood on the same tack. O' More saw the error, but of course could not think of interfering with his commander's orders; the consequence was that they received a most destructive broadside from the French frigate, whilst the corvette fired her bow guns into her stem. Three men were killed and five wounded by this broadside, and the Terpsichore

* This action between the Terpsichore and the two French ships is purely fiction.

was only able to deliver a very defective broadside in return. It was blowing exceedingly fresh, but still a splendid breeze for manœuvring.

The Terpsichore fought gallantly, but the men clearly perceived that her commander was not up to the management. Her sails and rigging were much cut up, and so were those of the corvette; whilst a tremendous broadside from the frigate swept the deck, mortally wounding the Terpsichore's commander, and Lieutenant Eaton, killing one midshipman, five men, and disabling nine of the crew. The captain of the Terpsichore had only the power to say, as they carried him below, "I resign the command to Lieutenant O'More."

The enthusiasm of the crew was incredible. The Terpsichore was now under the command of one who could handle her like a cutter, and the French ships soon ascertained that fact, for after an hour's desperate cannonading, the Terpsichore suddenly wearing, came within ten yards of the corvette, and poured in a most deadly broadside,

totally dismasting her, and leaving her a mere wreck upon the troubled deep.

A wild cheer broke from the British crew, as they prepared everything ready for boarding; and picking his men, and aided by two of the oldest midshipmen in the service, our hero took advantage of a flaw in the wind, ordered the helm down, and the next moment was yard-arm and yard-arm with the French frigate, and then, with an exulting cheer, he sprang, with his boarders, upon the decks of the Frenchman.

Astounded at the fate of her consort, who had the signal flying that she was sinking, the crew of the French frigate gave way; but her gallant commander rallied them, and a terrible hand to hand fight took place, till the French commander and Lieutenant O'More met on the quarter deck, and a fierce fight took place. Fortune sided with our hero, and the Frenchman fell, whilst our hero received, at the same moment, a severe thrust of a cutlass, from the first lieutenant of the French frigate, which went

through his arm, close to the shoulder, just as Phelim McFarlane and a gallant band cleared the quarter deck, and with a tremendous cheer, hauled down the colours, the crew of the frigate retreating below, and giving up the ship.

O'More saved the officer who had wounded him, or he would have been slain; and as soon as the ship was gained, ordered out the boats, to save as many lives as possible, from the corvette, which was sinking rapidly, and firing guns to the last. Only her captain, second lieutenant, two midshipmen, and forty men were saved out of her crew; and those, by incredible exertions, were taken on board the Terpsichore.

The action had lasted five hours. Both ships were terribly cut up, in rigging and sails, for it had been a close action, all through. Having had his wound dressed by the surgeon of his own ship, Magnus O'More proceeded to make his arrangements, in doing which, he did not forget the affair of the Vestale. Afterwards, he visited the wounded. The unfortunate commander of

the Terpsichore was dead; Lieutenant Eaton, though very severely wounded, was not mortally so; he pressed the lieutenant's hand, saying,

"Your old luck, Magnus—you bear a charmed life; but I am told a French officer, whilst you were fighting his captain, gave you a sword thrust from behind."

"No, no, Eaton, not from behind; he saw his captain falling, and thrust at me fairly enough. Luckily, he only disabled my left arm, and I afterwards saved his life. He only did his duty."

"Ah! the old Terpsichore knew who was working her. I often heard poor Bowen say you knocked her about like a ship's cutter. I wish you joy, dear friend, you will be made a commander for this splendid action."

Pressing Eaton's hand, our hero proceeded on deck. The men in both ships were actively engaged in repairing damages, splicing, knotting, and renewing their rigging, and replacing damaged topgallant masts and yards. The French officers and men were divided between

the two ships, and a good and sufficient prize crew put on board the French frigate. Early the next morning, they were all to make sail; but were forced to abandon the intention of visiting Gibraltar. Heavy gales from the south-east forced them well away to the north, for the French frigate's masts were greatly injured, and much sail could not be carried. So, keeping away for the Irish coast, the wind gradually drew to the south and west; and finally, after a tedious passage, having again to battle easterly gales in the Channel, Magnus entered Plymouth Sound with his prize, the 20th of September.

We will not detain our readers with minute details. The Terpsichore was ordered for repairs —our hero proceeded to London. His capture of the splendid French frigate, and the sinking of the corvette, and the gallantry of the action altogether, caused his being raised to the rank of commander; and as the Terpsichore required considerable repairs before again proceeding to sea, her crew were discharged, being entitled to

a very considerable amount of prize money. The French frigate was purchased into the service. The crew of the Terpsichore subscribed for a splendid piece of plate, which they presented to their commander, and, one and all, vowed they would wait till he again proceeded to sea, whether in the Terpsichore, or any other ship. Our hero received this mark of esteem and affection, from the officers and crew, with much emotion.

Being at leisure for some time, Magnus proceeded to visit his kind friend and early protector, Captain Broomly, from whom he experienced a most warm reception.

We forgot to mention, that his first visit, after leaving Plymouth, was to restore to the bereaved Emily Germain the portrait so cherished by the gallant and unfortunate George Templeton. This was a painful task; and for many days it depressed our hero's spirits.

Captain Broomly had received the casket from the hands of Lieutenant Barker, and, acting by

his advice, our hero determined to proceed to Ireland, and visit Lady Courtown, to whose son he had been appointed guardian, with a handsome legacy by the late Lord Courtown; and he determined to be guided by her ladyship's lawyer. The captain completely agreed with our hero that, notwithstanding the cruel treatment he had received, in his infancy, from his uncle, it would be far better, for the family honour, to come to some amicable arrangement. Magnus, for Norah's sake, was willing to forget all; his main object was to vindicate his father's and mother's fair fame from reproach, and establish his own unquestionable legitimacy. Packing up all the principal papers and documents, after a week's stay, with friends so dear to him, he proceeded at once to Dublin, taking his faithful follower, Phelim McFarlane, with him.

Mr. Gordon, the late Lord Courtown's principal law adviser, and Lady Courtown also, received our hero most kindly, the lawyer felt quite satisfied that O'More was the late Roderick O'More's

legitimate son and heir; but he could by no means see, for he had frequently conversed with Lady Courtown on the subject, how he could possibly prove his mother's first marriage.

On looking over the papers and documents placed in his hands by Commander O'More, he exclaimed, using his favourite expression, "By the Lord Harry, it is all right! Clear as day, I was going to say; but our days in this climate are the reverse of clear. Why, my young friend, there's no refuting these documents — an interview with your uncle, unless he's a madman, will, with your noble and generous proposals, settle the matter. The best thing you can do, Captain O'More," continued the lawyer, rubbing his hands, and looking very sagacious, and smiling, "will be to marry the daughter, Miss Norah. By the powers! she is a most lovely creature, and the most amiable of her sex— adored by everybody, except," the lawyer added, slowly, "her own family. I've been in her company often at Courtown's; and if I had been

thirty years younger, I should have lost both my heart and my senses."

Our hero laughed, saying, "Mine, then, will be a dangerous visit to Courtown, for you say this fascinating young lady is constantly there. However, I will set out to-morrow, and shall hope and expect to see you there, some day next week."

This was settled; Magnus O'More arrived at Courtown, and thus chanced to be on the spot, when Norah was placed in a situation where her life would have been sacrificed, but for his assistance.

CHAPTER V.

When Lady Courtown left Commander O'More in the drawing-room, she proceeded to the chamber, where Norah, after changing her dress, and taking some simple restorative, was reposing upon a sofa before the fire.

"Well, my love," said the amiable Lady Courtown, sitting down beside her favourite, and looking earnestly into her beautiful but pale features, "how do you feel, after that frightful bath? I do so thank God that no life was lost."

"Ah!" said Norah, having heard that such was the case, and that poor Susan had recovered the fright, "I feel quite restored. Captain O'More thinks nothing of his gallant rescue, for

water is his element; but I owe him a life," she added, with enthusiasm, "and that shall never be forgotten."

"Norah, Norah, guard well that little heart, if you do not wish this gallant sailor cousin of yours to win it, for, I assure you, few men possess a greater charm of manner than Commander O'More. You have said, as a boy, he was the handsomest creature you ever saw; but, believe me, he is far more dangerous as a man."

A slight increase of colour passed over Norah's sweet face. She would not have spoken out her thoughts for worlds; but she said, half seriously, half playfully,

"Sailors are not to be trusted, they say—every new pretty face steals away the memory of that last seen. Magnus O'More is my cousin; and you know, Euphemia, I have always looked upon him as one cruelly wronged by my family. I mean by my father and uncle. I do not condemn my father for retaining estates, if he thought them his by right, and there were no

proofs to the contrary; but I do severely censure the conduct pursued towards this young man, when a child. I am sure it was my uncle's pernicious influence that blinded my father."

"Ah! Norah, my love, pardon me; your father is a hard, and alas! a heartless man. Your uncle is a brute. But now Magnus has every document to prove his mother's marriage, and has been acknowledged by the Duke de Cabra as his grandson, and is thus unquestionably entitled to the estates of his father, and the back rents for many, many years; and yet, this noble-minded, generous man, is quite willing to forget all—to require nothing of your father—to make him an equivalent for the estates, of which, on proving his birth, the law would enforce the restoration to the right heir, and to preserve the honour of the family name, so that the world may not accuse his uncle of having seized upon the estates unlawfully, and cast him like an outcast upon the world. This,

Norah, he is willing to do, and much more ; and all for your sake."

There were tears in Norah's eyes, as she leant her head upon Lady Courtown's shoulder, who, kissing her fair forehead, whispered, "There is no fear, I predict, that Magnus O'More may love, and love in vain ; the greatest and fondest wish of my heart would be to see you two united, and thus heal the wounds inflicted by your father upon O'More's generous heart."

In the evening Norah felt so little the effects of her morning's bath, that she joined Lady Courtown and O'More at the tea table. She met her cousin with her usual frank graceful manner. If her pale cheek received back some of its usual bloom, and her voice faltered a little, as she placed her hand in that of her deliverer, when expressing her deep gratitude for life preserved, we need not wonder. During the evening Lady Courtown insisted on Magnus O'More giving them a full account of his adventures in Spain,

and explaining how he came to be reported missing and supposed drowned; "a report, I assure you," she added, "that filled more than one breast with grief and dismay."

"I little thought," returned O'More; "that those misfortunes were to be the cause of future good fortune. When tossed overboard, and cast by the waves upon the coast of Spain, I little supposed the object of my life, the dream of years, was to follow my mishap; but so Providence ordered it"

He then briefly related what ensued in Spain. We are not quite sure that he stated that Juana was a very bewitching maiden, or that Donna Maria had for a moment fascinated him by her beauty; but for the rest, he was a very modest historian, and received the congratulations of his fair auditors with becoming gravity. The evening, including the little supper that closed it, was passed by all present delightfully, and our hero returned to his couch, perfectly satisfied that all previous impressions made by the fair portion of

the creation were faint and evanescent, and that the one that now had full possession of his breast, was the only one that ought ever to have a place there.

The following day, the worthy lawyer, Mr. Gordon, arrived, just as the party at Courtown were preparing for dinner. All were pleased to see Mr. Gordon, as he was a very cheerful, agreeable person.

"I assure you, ladies and gentleman," said the lawyer—as the conversation turned upon the very troubled and serious state of the country, then on the eve of the great rebellion—"I assure you a journey from Dublin to Galway in the mail is no joking matter; we were attended by a troop of dragoons nearly all the way to Cork, changing at the different towns, within seven miles of Kilken. Several shots were fired as the mail passed through a hollow with wood at each side of the road. I can't say who they were fired at, the dragoons or us. No one, at all events, was hit, and the dragoons were useless."

"I am quite alarmed," said Lady Courtown; "and have serious thoughts of crossing over to England?"

"You are quite quiet here, Lady Courtown," said the lawyer. "There are no lawless bands about this country, and you are too much loved to feel apprehension from any here."

"But is it possible," exclaimed Magnus O'More, who knew little of the state Ireland was in at that period; "that my misguided countrymen can possibly be so mad as to break out into open rebellion against England?"

"Oh, they are mad enough, Captain O'More, for anything, as far as that goes, but in truth, the political feeling throughout the country is serious; and there are great names mixed up in the outbreak that is expected. But the government is prepared, and the troops numerous; if anything should occur, it will be a mere flash in the pan."

"I most sincerely and devoutly pray, Mr. Gor-

don," said Norah, seriously; "that there will not be even that. An outbreak against the government, and the loss of life that would ensue, would engender a feeling of hatred between classes, and against England, that a century will scarcely wash away."

"You are quite right there, my dear Miss Norah; there are faults on both sides, but I trust a wise and clement policy will stay the rash leaders, who are ready to plunge the country into strife and useless waste of valuable blood."

Francis, the future heir of Courtown, was growing up a very charming child; to Magnus O'More, his young guardian, he seemed to take a most prodigious liking, and insisted on calling him papa; and every moment that he could, he was to be found by his guardian's side.

It was settled that evening that Mr. Gordon should proceed the next day to Courtown, and have an interview with Mr. O'More; he had full power from our hero to come to an amicable ar-

rangement; in fact, it seemed impossible for any man, unless a madman, to refuse the terms Mr. Gordon was empowered to offer.

"By the Lord, Harry, Mr. O'More will have the best of it," said the lawyer; but our hero was resolved, for Norah's sake, that no memory of the past should mar an amicable settlement.

The next day Lady Courtown was ordering the carriage for Mr. Gordon, but he said he would prefer riding; he delighted in a ramble unencumbered by an attendant and the ride from Courtown to Ashgrove was lovely, even, during the first week of October.

Mr. Gordon had a delightful ride. As he rode up the avenue to Ashgrove Mansion two gentlemen, with their dogs and guns, were walking across the lawn; one he recognised as Gorman O'More; the other, he guessed, was Sir James de Boriden. They both looked very intently at Mr. Gordon, who reined in his horse at the front door; a servant coming to his side, he sent in his card, requesting an interview with Mr. O'More. The

domestic called a groom, and then Mr. Gordon was ushered into the library.

In a few minutes Mr. O'More entered the room, the two gentlemen bowed very stiffly. They had been known to each other at the period of the law-suit for the thirteen acres of bog, Mr. Gordon being Lord Courtown's solicitor at that time.

"To what do I owe the pleasure of this visit?" asked Mr. O'More, coldly.

"I wait on you on the part of Captain Roderick Magnus O'More," said Mr. Gordon, quietly.

"I know of no such person living, sir," returned Mr. O'More, "and if you call an impostor, who I understand has assumed that name, by such a title, I give you notice that no overtures of any kind coming from him will be listened to by me; therefore, if that is your purpose in calling on me, Mr. Gordon, the sooner our interview ends the better."

Mr. Gordon checked his rising anger; he was determined still to make an effort to bring about his client's wishes.

"You are not, perhaps, aware, Mr. O'More, that I carry about me documents that clearly and distinctly—"

"Sir," interrupted Mr. O'More, rising, "I have told you my mind on this subject; and I do not care a fig for all the documents you possess; they are all forgeries; it is a gross piece of imposture. I have just heard that this man, who duped the late Lord Courtown into the belief he was the legitimate son of my late brother, when, in fact, he is the nephew of a man named Jack or John Muggins—is now at Courtown Castle. That my daughter may not be insulted by an introduction to such an audacious imposter, I will send my carriage to bring her home; and I shall take care how, in future, she visits at Courtown Castle."

Mr. Gordon drew a long breath: he was confounded by Mr. O'More's speech—how he could dream of saying what he did utterly amazed him; it appeared incredible. Before he could recover

himself, Mr. O'More made him a salutation, and quitted the room.

"Well, by the lord, Harry," said Mr. Gordon, "this exceeds anything I ever heard. The man is mad—nephew of Jack Muggins!" and then the lawyer indulged in a hearty laugh, took up his hat, and walked out of the house. A groom was leading his horse about, so the lawyer mounted, and leisurely rode down the avenue.

"Short and sweet," thought Mr. Gordon; "our interview was all cut and dried before I came. O'More must have spies about, and knows of my young client's being at Courtown, that's clear. Hum! he must be brought to reason. By the lord, Harry! he will find this a worse job than the thirteen acres."

Mr. Gordon rode leisurely along by the side of the lake, full of thought, and turning over in his mind the troubles the young couple—Norah and the gallant sailor, for he saw plainly enough how young love was making his advances—would have with such a father as Mr. O'More, of Ashgrove.

"Well," soliloquised the lawyer, "it's quite true 'the course of love never runs smooth.' I was in love once myself—never but once;—never tried that infernal little god again; stuck to my briefs and folios."

Mr. Gordon had reached a thick plantation about three miles from Ashgrove, where the road quitted the borders of the lake, wound through the wood, and, after winding through the plantation again, came out upon the borders of the lake.

The lawyer was riding leisurely along, close to the trees, when he suddenly received a stunning blow from behind, which, crashing through his hat, fell heavily on his head, tumbling him off his horse, and leaving him senseless upon the road.

A whistle rung shrilly through the wood, and immediately half-a-dozen men habited as ordinary day labourers sprung out of the plantation, which had a quantity of low thick brushwood here and there covering the ground, and joined the man who had struck the blow, and who was standing

over the person of the unfortunate lawyer. This man came stealthily out from behind a lofty oak, and with one blow of a loaded bludgeon had felled Mr. Gordon;—his face was blackened, he was busy searching the lawyer's pockets. He made a sign to the men who joined him, and immediately three of them hastened along the road leading to Courtown, the other three towards Ashgrove. The man with the blackened face carefully removed every paper and document the lawyer carried in his capacious great coat pocket, chuckling to himself all the time; having transferred the papers to the large pockets in his own long frieze coat, he also took possession of Mr. Gordon's watch-purse, and even a bunch of keys; he then examined the lawyer's head, muttered "a mere nothing!" applied a whistle to his lips—the shrill tones of which rung clearly through the air,—he then plunged into the wood, and disappeared. The road on which the lawyer lay was a lonely one, not much frequented; there was another path more generally used, half-a-mile the other

side of the wood, because it passed through the hamlet of Ashgrove.

Mr. Gordon, as the cool air played over his face, began slowly to recover from the stunning effects of the blow, and presently he opened his eyes, gradually recovering his recollection. He then put his hand to the back of his head. There was a bump certainly, and one that might puzzle a young phrenologist. His head was not cut, so muttering something not very complimentary to the striker of the blow, he sat up, and looked around him. He then tried his pockets, and, notwithstanding his mishap and some bruises and contusions received in falling, he laughed, as he got upon his legs, saying,

"Gone, all gone; by the Lord Harry! a clean sweep; but they're bit. They could not surely suppose that I would carry the original documents about me in these times and within reach of such clever gentleman conveyancers as Mr. O'More and his worthy brother-in-law, Hamilton; who if I am not very much mistaken, have both

a hand in this affair; but, my worthy gentlemen, you will find increasing the size of a lawyer's head a very expensive joke. But where's my horse? they have not taken him, surely."

Whilst looking about him, every instant recovering his strength, he heard the sound of horses' feet, as if galloping, and in an instant two servants, in the livery of Lady Courtown, came into sight.

"Stop! Hillo; what's the matter?" exclaimed Mr. Gordon.

"Can't sir," returned one of the men, checking his horse a little, and speaking hurriedly, "our lady's little boy and Miss O'More have been carried off, and Captain O'More murdered," and setting spurs to his horse, he galloped furiously after his comrade.

Mr. Gordon, appalled, staggered against a tree; his sight seemed gone—the objects around him appeared to be in a maze.

"Good God! what have I heard? It must be a mistake. Captain O'More murdered! The

heir of Courtown and Miss Norah carried off! Am I dreaming?"

There was a little brook near him; he stooped and washed his face and temples, and being a strong, able man, though past fifty-five, began hurrying along the road to Courtown, endeavouring, as he walked rapidly on, to collect his scattered thoughts,—for well knowing the distracted state of the country, it was quite possible for persons to commit any act, however atrocious, almost without inquiry or investigation. Just as he cleared the wood, he beheld his horse, quietly grazing by the hedge, down a green lane. After a little coaxing, he caught him, knotted the broken bridle, mounted and galloped towards the castle, in a state of mind and a confusion of ideas indescribable.

As he rode up the noble avenue, he saw groups of men, and several domestics, mounted and armed; riding up, he exclaimed,

"Tell me, for God's sake, what is this terrible calamity!"

"Some desperate ruffians, sir," replied a footman, "have carried off our young master and Miss O'More, who were walking by the lake; and it is thought they have murdered Captain O'More, for we found two dead bodies close to the lough, and the ground trampled, and marked, and spotted with blood to the very water's edge."

"Then you have not found the body of Captain O'More?"—a gleam of hope rushing through the lawyer's brain, not very clear at that moment.

"No, sir; but my lady thinks the villains have thrown it into the lake."

The mounted men then rode off, and agitated, though still hoping, Mr. Gordon entered the castle.

Mr. Gilman, the butler, received him, evincing great agitation and bewilderment.

"Oh, sir; God help us! Is not this fearful? My lady is almost out of her senses. She has been in hysterical fits ever since. Doctor Markham is with her. It is awful, sir; our dear

little lord gone, and Miss Norah; and that fine young officer murdered and thrown into the lake. The Lord be merciful to us all!"

Mr. Gordon was almost as bewildered as the butler; his own ill treatment and robbery were quite banished from his mind; but controlling his feelings and thoughts, he said,

"Is there any positive proof of Captain O'More's being killed, or that his body has been thrown into the lake? But just give me a glass of wine; I have met with an accident, and I feel faint."

"God bless me, sir; you do look pale, and there's blood on your neck-cloth; but I'll get you the wine."

Having swallowed a glass or two of wine, Mr. Gordon told the butler how he had been knocked off his horse and robbed. Mr. Gilman crossed himself, muttering "that great calamities were, he was afraid, going to happen at Courtown."

A servant came to request Mr. Gordon would join Doctor Markham in the drawing-room; the lawyer rose and proceeded there.

"How is her ladyship?" were the first words.

"A little more tranquil since I gave her a composing draught. She was very hysterical indeed. I don't understand the affair myself. Had no time to ask particulars. Heard Lady Courtown say that her little boy and Miss O'More, and some one she called Captain— "

"Captain O'More."

"Oh, yes; that's the name,—same family I suppose as the family at Ashgrove," (the doctor had only recently settled near Courtown, but was known by Lady Courtown to be a very skilful medical man.)

"Yes, the same family," answered the lawyer.

"Well, her ladyship imagines that all three have been murdered and thrown into the lake. But I cannot imagine that rebels, for such the perpetrators must be, would murder them. Much more likely to carry them off for some purpose or other—in hope of reward, may be. God bless me! you are bleeding, Mr. Gordon; what's the matter?" and Doctor Markham looked at the lawyer's head.

"It's only a knock from a bludgeon; the rascal hit hard, though."

"Hard," repeated the doctor, "faith, I should not like one half so hard on any other part of the head,—and then proceeded to take out his case of instruments.

"Steel!" exclaimed Mr. Gordon, who detested all kinds of surgical operations, "What are you going to do, Markham? It only wants a towel and a basin of water."

"Very good things in their way," said the doctor, "but you see sir," and he took out a pair of scissors; "the rascal—by-the-bye, what did he hit you for, Gordon?"

"Why, confound him, to knock me down of course, and then rob me."

Doctor Markham opened his eyes, and made a strange grimace.

"What! knock you down and rob you in broad daylight? that's not orthodox. Keep quiet; I just want to cut away some hair the rascal has knocked into your caput. Oh, lucky fellow!

No great harm done. Now a basin of water and a piece of sticking plaster, and a clean shirt will finish your cure; but I can tell you, a couple of inches more to the right or left, and your chance was a bad one."

"Well, there's some luck in that," said Mr. Gordon. "Now let us have some one up that can give something like a clear account of this affair, for, like you, I imagine they are carried off, not murdered."

The trampling of horses' feet and the jingling of warlike weapons announced the arrival of military. So Mr. Markham and Mr. Gordon proceeded into the hall to see who had arrived, as a strict investigation would now take place.

CHAPTER VI.

The arrivals were Captain Haw and ten mounted Dragoons. The domestics proceeding to the station where the military were posted, some five miles from the castle, met Captain Haw and his party, and at once told him what had occurred at Courtown Castle; and the captain, well acquainted with Lady Courtown, galloped on to investigate the affair.

Mr. Markham, who knew Captain Haw, introduced Mr. Gordon, at the same time stating what had occurred to him. But the lawyer at once said,

"I pray you lose no time in making inquiries into this dreadful and mysterious business."

"I am most anxious to do so," returned the captain. "I have had intelligence that a large body of insurgents have crossed the county, and I have no doubt this outrage has been committed by some of these men."

The butler and the domestics were then assembled, and they all proceeded to the place where the two dead bodies lay, and where they supposed the struggle must have taken place, for no one saw or knew anything about it, save finding the bodies, and that Miss O'More, the child, and Captain O'More were known to have been near that spot, having gone out for a walk.

On reaching the place named, which was within a few yards of where the boat upset, they perceived the ground much trampled, and there lay the two dead men.

"Humph!" muttered Doctor Markham, turning over the bodies, to ascertain the cause of death. "This fellow has a bullet hole through his head; that settled him. This other has had his head smashed in, by an axe probably, and a

deuced hard blow it must have been. He did not require a second."

"These fellows," said Captain Haw, "look like day labourers, to judge by their garments; they were both young, and apparently very strong, able fellows. Do any of you know anything of them?" he added, turning to the domestics.

"No, Captain; we none of us know them."

"Was the gentleman you call Captain O'More, an army officer?"

"No," put in Mr. Gordon, "he is a very young man, but is nevertheless a commander in the Royal Navy."

"Indeed," said Captain Haw, "was he in the habit of going armed, for this fellow was killed by a pistol shot."

"Yes, sir," said the butler, "he always carried a brace of small pistols and his sword."

"Was there a boat seen on the lake near this spot this morning?" inquired the captain.

No boat had been seen.

"Are you all here—all the male domestics belonging to the castle?"

The butler looked round, and then said,

"No; I do not see Barney Roony."

The rest gazed at each other, and then said, "He is not here, anyhow."

"One of you go and look for him. How long has he been in the service of Lady Courtown?"

"Not quite six months, Captain," replied the butler. "He is a very quiet, inoffensive man. I hired him just before her ladyship arrived in Ireland. She wrote to me to increase the servants. He is a Clare man, and lived with one or two good families there."

"Humph, let me have a look at him."

"We cannot find him anywhere," said the servant, returning from the castle; "you know, Mr. Gilman, that he attended at breakfast."

"Yes, I know he did," replied the butler, "but I have not seen him since."

"What kind of a man is he?" inquired the dragoon officer.

"A man about thirty, or so—a tall well-made fellow—light hair and fair complexion."

"Any particular mark about his face?"

"Yes, Captain," said one of the domestics, "he has a cut over his left eye, a deep one, and an inch long, which he tries to cover with his hair. I asked him one day how he got it, and he said, 'out hunting—a fall from his horse when in the service of Squire Calligan, in Clare county.'"

"Who first saw these dead bodies?"

"Mrs. Staples, Captain, our young lord's nurse. She thought it was going to rain, and she came down here with umbrellas and cloaks; but when she saw the dead bodies, she ran back screaming, and fainted with fright."

A female domestic came down from the castle, stating that her ladyship was extremely anxious to see Captain Haw and Mr. Gordon—that in half an hour she would join them in the drawing-room, where they would find refreshments.

On the morning that Mr. Gordon set out to visit Ashgrore, with full hopes of bringing matters respecting his client's affairs to an amicable conclusion, Magnus O'More, Norah, and little Francis had proceeded for a walk along the

borders of the lake, the day looked so inviting. Lady Courtown had some pressing letters to write, and she remained within, promising to join them if she had finished in time. Magnus and Norah were much interested in Mr. Gordon's mission. Bessy McFarlane had spent a couple of hours with the latter that morning, and stated that Phelim had as yet failed in tracing the fisherman, John Muggins, who, he suspected, was dead. No trace of the cottage or its inmates remained. Having reached the lake through the plantation, they proceeded along the charming path, by the side of the low hedge that divided them from the shore, little Francis gambolling and frolicking on before them.

"How very beautiful all the views are from this side of the lake, Norah," remarked our hero, though to tell the truth he was much more attracted by the beauty and grace of his companion, now quite recovered from her dangerous immersion; and her young heart, full of hope that Mr. Gordon's persuasions would have effect.

She had received a very cold note from her mother the previous evening, stating that she owed the accident she met with to her own folly in going on the water such weather; that she need not think of returning home till after the Hunt Ball, which she presumed she had no intention of attending.

Now Mrs. O'More had not the slightest wish that her daughter should make a match for herself. If she could not be persuaded to take Sir James Boriden, she would much rather she remained unmarried, for the fortune left her by her grandmother, if it had to be paid, would fearfully cripple their already embarrassed income.

In answer to our hero's remark respecting the beauty of the scenery, Norah said,

"Yes, the mountain scenery here is finer than from Ashgrove; but Ashgrove has more variety, and the lake is so much broader."

"Ah, Norah," said our hero, "how I loved that view from the Ashgrove windows, when a

child. You can imagine, dear cousin, how anxious I am that all should be happily settled, for your sake as well as my own."

There was a touching softness in the young commander's tone, a look of so much confidence and affection in his expressive features, that Norah felt it deeply.

"I will not deny," he added, speaking softly, as he gazed into her thoughtful and beautiful features, "I will not deny, but that the wish of my heart is to become dearer to you than a cousin."

Norah trembled, but in a voice much agitated, she said,

"Alas, Magnus, we know not how this matter we are so anxious about may end. My uncle Hamilton has a very powerful influence over my father's mind. If he is guided by his unnatural and vindictive feelings, we have nothing to hope. That my father acted from his prompting in treating you so cruelly, I am quite certain, and I think my father really thought he was assum-

ing rights against which there could be no dispute."

"I have stated," said Magnus "to Mr. Gordon that such is my belief. But, dear Norah, let this matter end as it may, may I not live in hope that this dear hand," and he laid his on her trembling fingers, "may yet be mine? It is true our actual acquaintance has been short; but for years you have ever been before my mind's eye. You have been the dream of my youth, to realise which is now the ardent aspiration of my manhood."

He pressed the hand he held to his lips, but the only answer was a very eloquent one, —her eyes were suffused with tears. At this moment they were aroused by a cry from little Francis, who was some few paces on before them, and who turned and ran back to them, immediately after which a man's head appeared above the bank, and then disappeared again.

"What is the matter, love?" asked Norah, as the child caught Magnus by the hand.

"I'm not afraid now," said the boy boldly, "Now I have papa by the hand."

"Just take his hand, Norah," said our hero, "I saw a man's head poked up through yonder bushes, as if watching something," and he walked on rapidly towards the spot. He had scarcely gone twenty yards, when a shriek from Norah caused him to turn, and to his intense surprise and rage, he beheld her in the grasp of two men, who were forcing her and the child over the bank towards the lough. They were nearly three quarters of a mile from the castle, and between them was a thick wood, whilst the place was altogether removed from observation. Drawing his sword, for he always, for certain reasons, wore his naval undress, he rushed to Norah's assistance. She resisted strongly—one man having taken the child and covered it with a mantle; but six other men started up the bank between them, armed with cutlasses and bludgeons. The foremost Magnus shot dead, and with a skilful parry, put aside a cutlass blow

aimed at him; another snapped a pistol within a yard of his face, missing fire; this man he ran through with such force that the hilt came against his chest, and he was hurled to the ground. Magnus reached Norah, and, putting his arm round her waist, extricated her from the ruffian's grasp; but the rest fell upon him, with savage oaths, and fearing Norah would be cut down in the contest, he loosened his hold, saying, "Fly, dear Norah, fly; I will strive and keep these villains back," felling another at his feet as he spoke. But Norah was again seized, and the men in a body threw themselves on O'More. His sword snapped, but catching a huge red-headed ruffian round the waist, he dashed him over the bank, and whilst wresting a bludgeon from another, a voice called out "Kill him! hit him over the head!" and a blow from behind at length struck him senseless to the ground. Poor Norah gave an agonized cry, as she saw him fall, and was immediately, with the child, borne swiftly into a boat, whilst a man

with a slouched hat and his face muffled to the eyes, came up, looked at the body of Magnus, drew a pistol from his breast, and stooping, was placing it to our hero's head, when his arm was seized from behind by one of the band, a young, tall, athletic-looking man.

"What the diaoul are you at?" he fiercely exclaimed. "Do you want to murder the man now our point is gained? Curse it! I know a trick worth two of that. Here, Jem, and you Phil, take him up, and stow him away in the bottom of the boat."

"Better pitch him into the lake," said the two men. "Diaoul! he has killed two outright, and run his sword through Rooney. Anna mon Diaoul! he'll never require a sticking plaster to close it up."

"Never mind; do as I tell you; put him in the boat along with Rooney, and make haste. Leave the dead where they are; they'll bury them; they are unknown here, and they can be of no further use. Better men meet the same fate;

who knows but that it may be ours next? He's a fine powerful young fellow; and if I had not come up and hit him that tap over the head, Diaoul take me! if I don't think he'd have settled you all."

In almost a moment our hero was lifted and thrown down on a sail in the bottom of a large fishing boat. Norah, trembling and frightened, pressed the terrified child to her heart, the men threatening that if she uttered a cry, they would throw the child into the water. She gazed upon the senseless body of O'More, and the memory of the anguish of that moment lived in her breast for years.

"He's not dead, miss," said the young man, the evident leader of the troop. "Don't take on so, miss; you will none of you be ill treated, though he has killed two of us."

"Fool!" muttered the muffled man, "you will repent this."

"No more fool than yourself," retorted the young man, with a scornful laugh, as they pushed

off into the lake, "you have nothing to do with the way I choose to execute our captain's orders."

Norah, when she heard the tones of the man muffled in the shawl, though disguised, uttered a cry, and clasped her hands in agony, saying, in a low voice,

"My God! Can such villany exist?"

"Ah," said the man, fiercely, and bending down close to Norah's ear, "you have recognised me?"

"Yes, I do know you, and I also know that the God, whom you have outraged through long years, will punish you, when you little dream of His just wrath."

"Viper! I would crush you now," savagely muttered the man; "but there's worse in store for you than my hatred."

Little Francis, from fright and fatigue, had cried himself to sleep, with his head resting on Norah's breast, covered with a shawl. The boat was going rapidly up the lake under sail and oar. Norah's eyes were fixed in intense anxiety upon

the form of Magnus, stretched on the old sail at the bottom of the boat; he showed by the movements of his limbs that he was recovering the stunning blow he had received.

"I say, boys," said the young man steering the boat, and who was evidently of a superior class to the rest, "just put a rope round the captain's legs, he will soon come to himself, and faith it won't do to let him have the free use of his limbs. He's a powerful man, and by gor he knows how to make use of his strength. Does Rooney show any signs of life?"

"Faix! I'm a thinking," said the man rowing the bow oar, and looking down at his wounded comrade, "that he's had his allowance; bedad the sword hilt came agin his chest like the butt of a bull's head."

At the name of Rooney, Norah started; could it be possible, she thought, that this Rooney and the man named Rooney at Courtown Castle were the same person; if so, this Rooney was the spy

who had betrayed all the movements of the inmates of Courtown Castle to her wretched uncle, who was leagued with these villains. What was their purpose or intention she could by no possibility imagine. If it was to destroy the heir of Courtown, that could have been done, and Captain O'More murdered, without carrying her off. It is true they did try to kill Magnus, and would have done so had not the young man steering the boat prevented them. She did not see her vile uncle stoop and put a pistol to O'More's head, or her horror of him would, if possible, have been greater.

It will not appear strange to any readers acquainted with the state of Ireland at the period of our story, that such an outrage could be perpetrated in broad daylight, within less than a mile of a mansion with fourteen or fifteen domestics of the male sex, and within five miles of a station of dragoons; but the spot chosen was extremely solitary, and not at all likely that

even the cries uttered would be heard through the thick plantation intervening between it and the castle.

The state of the greater part of Ireland was terrible; violence, the only law recognised by the fierce bands roaming through the country, under various assumed titles, but all rebels at heart. Hostilities had already openly commenced against the government, and the troops and the rebels met in sanguinary strife. In the county of Kildare a barrack containing a party of soldiers was attacked, burned, and the military massacred. The military in their turn retaliated, prisoners when taken were at once hanged.

But the unhappy rebellion of 1798 has but little to do with our tale. We leave our readers to judge for themselves, from the numerous histories of the period, what we should only fail in describing. The lawless state of the country and the total disregard to law or order gave to the wicked the power to carry out their iniquitous designs, and allowed men capable of

every crime to gratify the worst of passions and aggrandizement, with impunity. These men having nothing at stake, nothing to lose, and reckless of life in the pursuit of their views, dared any act to accomplish their purposes.

By the time the boat had sailed four or five miles up the lake, Magnus O'More had recovered complete consciousness. Norah shuddered, as a man moved on his bench, and permitted her eyes to rest on him her heart told her she fondly loved. That face was covered with blood, from a pike wound received over the left temple. As he regained his senses and his recollection, he made an effort to rise, but one of the men said, putting his hand on his shoulder,

"Keep aisy, my fine fellow, or we shall come to loggerheads again."

"I do not intend to offer resistance," returned O'More, looking round and seeing Norah's eyes fixed upon him, whilst the tears were rolling down her cheeks. "If you will untie my hands and feet I give you my honour I will make no kind of

effort to escape, as long as you hold that lady and child prisoners."

The boy heard the clear tones of his guardian's voice, and with a cry he threw off the shawl, and then stared, bewildered and amazed, on all around; but catching a glimpse of O'More, he held out his little hands, saying,

"Oh, papa, papa, take me and Norah from these wicked men," and he burst into tears.

"If you untie that man's hands," said Norah's uncle, "I will—" losing all shame from fear, and drawing a pistol from under his mantle, he pointed it at Captain O'More; but quick as thought Norah suddenly seized the pistol, and with a violent effort tore it from his grasp, and threw it into the lake, her wrist and hand being torn and bleeding in the struggle.

"You are a brave girl, by heaven you are," exclaimed the man steering. "Cut his cords, Jem Murphy; and now, Captain O'More, I hold you at your word, and by heaven the first man

that lays a hand on my prisoners, get's a leaden bullet through his head."

"May God forgive you, young man, as I heartily do," said Norah, in a faltering voice.

"It's all very well now, Arthur Botten," said George Hamilton, trembling with passion; "but you are a traitor to the cause, and—"

"Liar!" fiercely exclaimed the young man, changing his tone and manner; "for one pin I would toss your carcase into the lake. It is such men as you that peril our cause; in your own and others' selfish interest, the principle for which we armed is forgotten. I swore, for reasons you know not, to accomplish this act, and I'll complete my contract; but take you care, and keep out of my way when I wash my hands from this business."

When O'More's hands and feet were untied, he stooped over the side of the boat and washed his head and face in the clear lake, and then rising, came and placed himself beside Norah, saying to the person called Arthur Botten,

"I thank you for this courtesy; if I live it may be in my power to requite it."

"No, Captain O'More, never; I live or die in the cause I have embraced; say no more."

Hamilton, as he saw our hero step over the thwart, shrunk into his mantle, and passed into the bow of the boat. With a cry of joy Francis threw his arms round Captain O'More's neck, saying,

"Oh, papa, dear papa, won't you take me to my own dear mamma? why do these men take us away. Oh, there's blood on your face, papa."

Norah could not speak.

O'More kissed the boy, saying,

"Do not be afraid, Francis; God always protects those who love him. You will soon be in your dear mamma's arms again, my child."

Soothing the child and caressing him, he finally went off asleep, and then Norah took him in her arms.

"You are a brave noble-hearted maiden, my own Norah," whispered O'More; "I saw that

vile man's act and your courage. God will restore you to those who love you."

"I am with you," said the poor girl, in her low plaintive tones, "and if this dear child was with its mother, I could die with you resigned to God's will."

"Bless you, Norah, for those words; come what will, they will cheer the last moment when it comes."

It was getting rapidly dusk as the boat approached the termination of the lough; the shores rising into lofty hills, and wild precipitious heights. The men steered towards a cove of limited extent, the sails were lowered, and the boat ran up alongside a stone jetty.

"Now," said Arthur Botten to Magnus O'More, "am I to depend on your word, and that of the lady, you will quietly permit yourselves to be conducted to the place I have bound myself to bring you to? Resistance, or any attempt at escape, I may at the same time tell you, would be madness; you are not at this moment more than two

miles from the retreat of a body of five hundred patriots, under a bold leader, Captain McCormac,

"God protect us!" murmured Norah to herself. "Can this be the same terrible man; if so, we are lost, unless God protect us."

"You may be perfectly satisfied," returned Captain O'More, "that I shall not make the slightest effort to escape, and you must be aware this young lady cannct."

"Very good," observed Botten, "let us land." and O'More, taking the sleeping boy in his arms, all left the boat.

"What's to be done with Rooney?" asked one of the men, "he has some life in him yet."

"Carry him to Widow Mullins' cabin; he must take his chance; if she can cure him, well and good. But we have no surgeons amongst us yet."

Norah, wrapping her mantle round her, kept close to Magnus, and the party moved on. As to George Hamilton, the moment he put his foot on shore he hastened away, no one heeding his absence, or which way he went.

The country bordering this part of Lough Corrib, is one of the wildest in Connaught, but in the gloom of night the peculiar wild scenery they were led through was indiscernible, and the path requiring every care to keep, Norah leant on Magnus O'More's arm, though she frequently insisted on helping herself, for she feared he was hurt and sorely bruised in the contest he had engaged in in the morning; and in truth so he was, but his great strength of frame and great bodily endurance seemed to defy wounds or fatigue.

They ascended the hills by a very narrow, precipitous path. These hills were part of the range called Benlevy.

Francis awoke, but Magnus kept him quiet, and Norah's voice satisfied him that his two loved protectors were near him. The poor boy said he was thirsty, and wanted something to drink, but he would not cry, as long as his papa and Norah were with him.

They had ascended and travelled full two miles through a remarkably wild and deserted country. Not a sound disturbed the stillness of the night;

the air was, however, cold. Once or twice they were challenged in Irish, but not a soul was to be seen—when all of a sudden they halted before the rude door of a thatched cabin. One of the men knocked, and at the same time gave a peculiar whistle. After a few seconds a light appeared at one of the small windows, and then bolts were drawn, and the door opened. An elderly woman, holding a light, appeared, and behind her, gazing anxiously at the party, was a young woman, with a very prepossessing countenance.

"How late you are," said the elderly woman, in Irish.

"Better late than never, Peggy," returned one of the men.

Arthur Botten came up, and looking at Norah, said, "Here, Miss O'More, you and the child must rest for the night."

"Ah! my God," and the poor girl looked with a pale cheek, and eyes blinded with tears, into our hero's face.

Conquering his emotion, and knowing how

fruitless was opposition (for imperceptibly their numbers had considerably increased; in fact, on looking round in the dim light, he beheld about twenty men, armed with musket and dirk), "May God protect you, and He will," ejaculated O'More, as he pressed her hand; he dared not trust his voice to say more. Fortunately Francis slept, so resigning the boy into Norah's arms, she passed into the cabin, and then the door was closed and bolted.

"Move on," cried the leader. "Is Captain McCormac in the tower?"

"No," answered several of the men, "he will not be here till to-morrow."

"Well, then, I can put this prisoner in the tower for the night."

In a few minutes they reached the brow of a range of crags and broken masses of rock, with immense ferns and briars growing between them. As our hero looked down into a vale, he beheld numerous fires, and the dark shadows of men passing to and fro. These were the rebels en-

camped, but passing on and turning an angle of rock, they stopped before a tower of considerable height, one of those singular remains of antiquity, a puzzle and source of conjecture at the present day for the most learned *savans*. From this tower several men in a kind of uniform came out with lights.

"Who the diaoul have you got there, Botten?" said one with a green sash, a dragoon sabre, and a pair of different sized pistols in a buff belt.

"McCormac will tell you better than I can," returned Botten, "I must lodge him in the Captain's room for the night."

"Faith, he's in luck, then!" returned the other. "Is he a sodger?"

"No," returned Botten; "but go on and open the door. I've had a long day, and a sharp one."

They ascended a circular flight of stairs; one of the men unlocked a door, and Botten requested our hero to enter, telling him he would see to sending him some food.

Resigned to his destiny, his thoughts resting upon Norah, and caring little for self, he entered the room; one of the men placed a light on a wide table, and then all retired, closely locking and bolting the door after them.

CHAPTER VII.

Norah O'More, — with a very heavy heart, and soothing the violent grief of the child, now for the first time in its young life undergoing sorrow and privation,—followed the woman into a very homely chamber;—a turf fire was burning in the chimney place, and the smoke from which not finding the chimney a pleasant mode of egress gently diffused itself through the room, making Norah's eyes water, and the poor boy to cough.

"Open the winder a bit, Lizzy," said the elderly woman, speaking in Irish to the young one, who was gazing into Norah's features with wonder and admiration. "Bad cess to the

smoke! there's a chimney sure for it to go up, but it might as well have never been built."

Norah looked round, and, as well as the smoke would permit, perceived that all the room contained was two broken chairs, a bench, and a deal table, one or two cooking utensils, and half-a-dozen dilapidated dishes and plates stuck on a shelf; in one corner was a kind of wooden frames two feet from the ground, filled with straw, and a quilt like a horse-cloth thrown on one side.

"Is there no other room, my good woman?" asked Norah, with a sigh, speaking in her native tongue.

"Yes, miss," said the young woman, answering in very intelligible English, "the other room is for you and the child to sleep in."

"Do you think," went on Norah, pleased with the young woman's kind and good-humoured countenance. "Do you think you could procure me a little milk and bread for this dear child; for many hours he has had nothing to eat or drink," and she sat down, wearied and heart sick;

the child throwing its little arms round her neck bidding her not to cry, that he would cry no more and wait till he got some milk. Francis was a very sensible little fellow ; though scarcely four years old he seemed to understand that Norah could not take him to his dear mamma, and he fretted greatly at not seeing his guardian.

"I will get you some milk and bread, miss, if I can, and something for yourself from the tower ; there are provisions there for the captain, so don't be down-hearted, alanna," and, seeing the old woman enter the next room, she stooped down and whispered, "oh, Miss Norah, if I could help you, the saints in glory know I would ; and who can tell—theLord be good to us !—may be I may, but my husband is one of them," and coughing to draw the attention of the woman, she took up a cloak, and, throwing it over her, opened the door of the cabin and went out.

"Where's the colleen gone ?" asked the old woman, hastily, returning into the room, and, walking to the door, bolted it.

"She is gone to get this poor child some food," answered Norah. "Have you no food of any kind in this cabin?"

"No, faix; not as much as would feed a rat; we had praties and some fish this morning, but we ate them—we'll have more to-morrow, there are lots of mouths to fill here."

"But," said Norah, "those that brought us did not intend we should starve, did they?"

"Faix, I don't know, acushla, what they brought you here for, we gets little enough to feed two, as it is," and kneeling down before the turf she blew it up with her breath into a flame, and soon a bright, clear fire chased some of the cheerlessness from the miserable chamber.

In a quarter of an hour Lizzy returned with a basket-full of provisions, saying,—"they were bringing it down, miss, so I saved them the trouble. I did get some milk, it's goat's milk, miss, but very good milk."

"Oh! thank you," returned Norah, "I know that goat's milk is very good."

"I have brought a small tin saucepan to warm it in," added Lizzy, quite pleased.

"You are very kind," replied Norah; and the the boy, looking earnestly into Lizzy's face, said "mamma will thank you for getting me this milk, for I am very thirsty."

"Bless your dear little face!" cried the young woman, "you are young to begin with the wide world."

The old woman looked from one to the other, but said nothing,—she had stuffed an old pipe with tobacco, and, putting her head half up the chimney, consoled herself with a smoke. Lizzy drew the table near to Norah, and took a cold roast fowl and some loaves of bread from the basket, a mug and a bottle of wine.

"Lieutenant Botten sent you these, miss: he took them from the captain's stores. He has a kind heart, miss, but he's terrible wild and headstrong at times; he goes to a distance to-morrow."

The old woman was listening, but she under-

stood scarcely a word of English. When she spoke she spoke in Irish, which Norah spoke fluently.

Having warmed up some bread and milk, Norah poured it into a wooden bowl, and handed a wooden spoon to the heir of Courtown to help himself; he had watched the whole proceeding evidently with some curiosity, the wooden bowl and the spoon he eyed with surprise; but, on regarding it for a moment, he looked up into Norah's face, saying, "I am very hungry, Norah, do eat some, you must be hungry too," and he began eating. And thus the young lord learned his first lesson in the school of adversity.

Norah, weak and fatigued, ate a small quantity of bread and fowl, and drank a glass of wine, which, in some measure, restored her.

"Do you know, Lizzy," asked Norah, "what they did with the gentleman who was with us when we came to this cottage door?"

"Yes miss, Lieutenant Botten had him put into the captain's room in the old tower till the captain comes."

"Faix, Lizzy," interrupted the old woman in Irish, "you had better be easy with your tongue, I catched the word captain, and the less you says of him or any of the boys the better."

"I'm saying no harm, mother," returned Lizzy, "since my husband is one of them."

Francis, as soon as he had eaten his bread and milk, shewed signs of being sleepy, so our heroine asked the young woman to let him go into the next room, and she would lie down with the child; she was overpowered with fatigue.

Taking a candle, which she stuck into the neck of a bottle, Lizzy led the way into the next room, it contained a bed and a chair, and a piece of matting made of rushes covering the floor; the bed was clean and tidy, and had no doubt been brought there for her use.

"What could this cabin have been built for up in these wild hills?" asked Norah.

"Oh, miss, they do say that it was a great place, entirely, at one time, for making wh sky,

and that there's great caves under the cabin, and a hole under this bed for holding the still, and the tubs, and the whisky."

"Come, come, Lizzy avick, don't be talking all night; leave the lady and come here, and close the door."

"Well, good night, miss, the Lord have you in His care, and the blessed saints watch over you," said the young woman; and closing the door, she left Norah to her miserable reflections.

The child slept well, and Norah, before daylight, fell into troubled slumbers. When she awoke, she beheld her little companion sitting up, and anxiously gazing into her face, as quiet and as tranquil as if in his own splendid mansion. When he saw she opened her eyes, he put his arms round her neck, and kissing her, said,—

"Good morning, dear Norah. I have been watching you since the light came into that little window."

"My darling boy," returned Norah, fondly

caressing him, "how good you are; God will surely protect us, and restore you to your dear mamma."

Though too young to thoroughly understand his situation, or why they were thus kept in a rude miserable cabin, he evidently felt that some bad people, as he said, would not let them go home.

"Will mamma wonder why her little Francis does not come to bid her good morning, Norah?"

"She will, indeed, my child, and be very unhappy. But keep up your spirits, we shall not be long, I hope, from home."

"Where is my dear papa, my new papa, gone, Norah?"

"He is, I fear, shut up, as we are, Francis; but now we will get some breakfast."

There was a knock at the door, and Norah opened it. It was Lizzy.

"I have got some breakfast ready for you, miss; some coffee, and butter, and good bread, and a clear fire."

"Thank you, Lizzy," and taking Francis by the hand, Norah entered the other room.

Lizzy had contrived to get a cloth, with which she hid the old table. There were coffee and eggs, added to the remains of the fowl. The old woman sat eyeing the table, and watching every movement of Lizzy, and as she said something in English, she cried sharply,—

"Arrah! can't you speak in your own language, the lady speaks it as well as you do."

Lizzy regarded Norah with a troubled look, but said nothing. Francis sat down and made an excellent breakfast—Norah sufficient to satisfy nature, for appetite she had none; she was very pale, but calm and resigned. As the day wore on, the solitude of the place was broken by a loud knock at the cabin door. The old woman drew back the bolt, and to Norah's horror and indignation her hated uncle entered the room, and was evidently, even at that hour of the day, heated with drink, if not inebriated.

He was attired in the rebel uniform, wore a

green sash, with pistols stuck in it, and a dragoon sabre at his belt. Close beside him was a man with a red head and beard, of huge frame, and a fierce and savage countenance; he gazed first at the horror-struck Norah and the child, and then making a sign to Lizzy, he said, in Irish, "Come, take your cloak, I want you." Poor Lizzy cast a glance, certainly not of affection, at her brute of a husband, who went amongst his comrades by the name of Rory the Red, and then, with a look of compassion and regret at Norah, she followed him out of the cabin, leaving Norah with her detested uncle and the old woman, who at once left the room, going into the next and closing the door.

Norah scarcely breathed; the disgust and horror she felt in being in the presence of George Hamilton, she did not dream of disguising. She saw that he had been drinking; in fact, so completely brutalised and unnerved had he become by his vicious habits of intemperance, that he

could scarcely exist an hour without stimulants. Seating himself on the bench, he gazed for several moments at his niece, with a mocking, vicious glance. The child hid his face on Norah's bosom, saying,—

"Send that man away, dear Norah; send that horrid man away."

"Horrid, am I?" Hamilton repeated, with a sneering laugh; "young sparrow, if I had my finger on your throat, and I don't know what hinders me, I'd choke you, you brat, I would; what stops me now?"

"God!" exclaimed Norah, her eyes flashing, and in a voice that startled the half-drunken brute, and made him shudder, with all his apparent apathy. "God," she repeated, "whom you may pretend to disregard, but who, in your coward heart, you tremble at the name of, the just and living God whom you have outraged all your life!"

"Cease, accursed girl," interrupted Hamilton,

who became pale and ghastly to look at. "Cease, or—" and he laid his hand, his trembling hand, on the lock of one of his pistols.

But Norah never quailed, as with a look of unutterable scorn she said,

"Coward! you would, if you dared, murder a woman and a child, but I fear you not. We were not brought here to be murdered, even by you."

"Girl! you would drive one mad, but I will give no heed to your words. You shall know what you and your would-be lover were brought here for; as to that spawn of a vile and treacherous woman, whether it dies now or a few months hence it matters not—it is doomed."

Norah made no reply. She clasped the sobbing boy to her heart, for the rebel's tone and his words frightened him. Our heroine possessed a high and determined spirit—quail to her uncle she never did, and but for the child, whose arm was round her neck, she would have dared him without trembling, or a thought of self.

"You seem," continued George Hamilton,

"to think little, or pretend to think little, of the situation you are in. You are in the power of Roland McCormac. You don't know who Colonel McCormac is, or perhaps you wish to forget him."

"I know quite enough of the man you call Colonel McCormac not to be aware that to be in his power is bad; but I prefer being in his power to being in yours—God defend me from that!"

"Oh, you do, do you?" laughed George Hamilton, in a mocking tone. "You think him a lamb,—I'm glad of it; we will now speak upon business. You have eased my mind a little. Some time ago, you are well aware, all your family wished and were most anxious for you to marry Sir James Boriden, a capital match every way, and one any other young lady would have jumped at, but from obstinacy and a predilection for an outcast without a name you refused the baronet. However, that's no matter now, as he happens to be dead."

"Good God!—dead," repeated Norah, shud-

dering, and gazing at her uncle with an incredulous look.

"Perhaps you are sorry now," and reaching his hand over to the table where the bottle of wine stood, he poured its contents into a mug and drank half of it at a draught. "Come, that was good-natured, Norah, to leave some; talking makes one thirsty, and I think an ambassador from Roland McCormac is worthy of a glass of wine."

Disgusted, horrified, as she was, Norah had no other resource than to listen; but little as she felt or experienced of interest in Sir James Boriden, she could not hear of a human being thus cut off in the pride of manhood, and master of all man could wish for, whether for good or for evil, without some share of feeling.

"Don't you wish to know how your old lover went out of this world of suffering, as canting hypocrites call it. It's a capital world, my girl, if you have the means of enjoying its pleasures; the sufferings are only for those who are poor.

Women and wine—two glorious things—here's your health, niece."

"Miserable man, free me from your presence; it is horrible to listen to you."

"Yes, no doubt you would rather be listening to the fellow we have in limbo, calling himself an O'More. However, you must listen to me. I didn't tell you how Sir James departed this life. Do you remember the young gentleman that sat next you at Ashgrove at dinner, the day Sir James arrived—O'Kelly, that was his name. Well, this O'Kelly shot him dead the first fire; they fought a duel, and do you know for what?"

Norah was shocked; she did not utter a word; she knew it was useless to attempt to stop him, he had finished the bottle of wine, and his eyes glared at her, so that she dreaded for little Francis' sake to rouse him into one of his furious passions.

"Well," he continued, "I must tell you, for I know it will please you. At the hunt ball, your worthy suitor having imbibed a little too much

wine—he has no head—boasted before that hot-headed fellow, O'Kelly, that Irish girls were easily coaxed into granting favours. Mr. O'Kelly sharply contradicted him before several gentlemen, saying,

"'Why, Sir James, only the other day you cast a slur upon Irishmen in general, and now you would insult our females; you are boasting. Can you name an Irish girl that ever granted you a favour?'

"Well, poor Sir James not being very sober, and I suppose resenting your treatment, and piqued, mentioned your name, and O'Kelly instantly knocked him down, calling him a vile slanderer."

"My God!" exclaimed Norah, in bitter agony of heart, "how have I deserved this cruel insinuation? and to be followed by so terrible a punishment to the unhappy offender."

"Oh, my dear, if it will ease your maidenly scruples, nobody believed the Englishman; so the next day he sent your excellent brother with

a message to Mr. O'Kelly, and swore he would shoot him dead; but you see, my dear, things often go by the rule of contrary, for O'Kelly mortally wounded his antagonist, and received only a scratch himself, and I suppose by this time our friend the baronet is dead."

"Then you do not know that he is dead?" returned Norah, with a feeling of relief, and believing that her uncle had greatly exaggerated facts.

"Sure to be, by this time; Gorman and I owe him some trifling sums, I suppose this will be as good as quits."

"What an unfeeling heart this man has," thought Norah to herself; whilst her uncle continued—

"Now for the purport of my visit. Well, it seems Colonel McCormac saw you when in Dublin, and though you were but a mere slip of a girl he was so pleased with you that he now offers you his hand; indeed, he might have saved himself the trouble of asking, as you are so

completely in his power; he might as well have the ceremony performed at once; we have one or two very obliging priests here with us."

"And for what purpose or end, miserable, benighted man, have you sold body and soul to the enemy of mankind? What do you expect for the short period your life will last—the Almighty has numbered—"

"Curse you, hold your preaching, you infernal, unnatural girl; predicting my death!" and Hamilton, who was extremely superstitious, shouted in furious passion, "I shall live long enough, anyhow, to have my revenge—to see you the wife of a proclaimed rebel; and that child, too, will revenge me on a woman who for gold and titles spurned me; and upon that proud outcast, calling himself an O'More. I tell you, as sure as there's—" and he shook with a spasmodic cough, that was fast tearing his lungs to pieces, "as sure as I stand here, if you refuse to become McCormac's wife he will hang this would-be lover of yours, and that brat, to yonder tree,"

and he pointed through the window to a leafless blasted oak before the cabin door.

"He dares not—he dares not. Quit my presence, for I loath your very sight," exclaimed Norah passionately, and burying her face in her hands.

"Ha! ha!" shrieked Mr. Hamilton, excited into a paroxysm, "McCormac dares not, you say. Oh, idiot, to think he dares not! Fool! It's not more than ten days ago that he shut up, in a barn, some eighty or more heretics, with their wives and children, and set fire to it, and as the wretches tried to escape, McCormac and his men tossed them back with their pikes;* and yet you think Roland McCormac dares not hang a miserable impostor and a puling child. Ah, girl, you feel the truth of my words. You may bury your head in your hands, and curse me if you will; but I'll live to see the glorious deed that will revenge me upon you all," and seizing his hat he staggered through the doorway, slamming it with

* This was done at Scullabogue barn.

violence after him; and the old woman came out and bolted and locked the door, and then looked at Norah, who clasping the child to her heart, remained in a perfect stupor of horror, and agony of mind.

CHAPTER VIII.

MAGNUS O'MORE, being left in the half dilapidated chamber of the tower, threw himself on a seat, and fell into profound thought. Accustomed from his earliest years to a life of continued excitement and peril, the dangerous situation he was then in cost him little uneasiness or thought; but Norah was become very dear to him. He felt he had gained her love, or rather, that he had always held a place in her heart, and the thought was bliss, but a revulsion of feeling succeeded when he remembered that she was in the power of her wretched uncle, and a desperate and powerful leader of a band of rebels. What their purpose

could be in entrapping her he could not at all imagine, knowing nothing of McCormac, his designs, or his connection with George Hamilton and Gorman O'More.

He could very well imagine that George Hamilton, and his uncle O'More might plot to destroy him and the young heir of Courtown, with the certainty that in such a time of trepidation and terror throughout Ireland, the crime would escape detection.

One hope sustained our hero in his imprisonment, his devoted follower Phelim McFarlane was at liberty; he was to have arrived at Courtown the day before they were carried off. In his sagacity, devotion, unshrinking courage, and utter recklessness of life, if necessary to serve his master, he had wonderful confidence. To attempt to escape out of the tower would be madness, if practicable, for the entire vicinity was thronged with rebels, and his life would be sacrificed without benefiting Norah.

About two hours after his arrival in the tower,

the door was unlocked, and a man entering, placed some bread, some cold pork, and a jug of water on the table. He looked at our hero very keenly, as he put down the things, but did not utter a word, retiring and fastening the door after him.

There was a mattress on a wooden frame in the room, a table, some wooden chairs, and a bundle of quilts and blankets, but not another article; there was no window, only two narrow slits in the walls, which admitted light, and the very cold night breeze as well.

Bruised, and with some severe cuts, flesh wounds, received in his encounter with Arthur Botten's ruffians, O'More was glad, after taking a little food, and a good draught of water, to stretch himself on the mattress; and so passed the night. He was not disturbed the next day till, as well as he could judge by the light through the loopholes, near sunset, when men's voices reached his ear below his chamber; presently he heard steps on the stone stairs, the door was unlocked, and

three men entered the room, all attired in the green uniform of the rebels, and armed with pistols and swords. The foremost of the three had a distinguishing ornament, denoting that he was a leader in the rebel forces, of high rank. The other two were also officers, but of inferior grade.

The prisoner rose to his feet, and gazed at the men with a calm, steady look. One he at once recognised, and he felt a bitter pang, as he gazed into his emaciated features, that such a wretch as George Hamilton should again have any power over his destiny. The first who entered was Roland McCormac, the most inhuman of all the rebel leaders. At this time he was about five-and-thirty, tall, well made, and handsome; but nevertheless, there was something terrible and sinister in his look; his features though well formed and striking, when evil passions stirred his feelings, bore an impress of savage cruelty and ferocity.

He looked at Commander O'More's tall, and

singularly striking figure with surprise; and yet, with a look of savage satisfaction. He had conceived a strong passion for Norah O'More, from the very first time he beheld her, and amidst all his wild and daring schemes, he had associated her with his triumphs. Connected with George Hamilton and Gorman O'More for years, he made them his tools, and increased the vicious propensities, and encouraged the vile profligate habits of Hamilton, till he gained a complete power over him.

George Hamilton was not a particle less cruel or vicious than Roland McCormac, but he was a coward.

With all McCormac's scheming, Norah O'More, despite his power over her weak and vain brother, was always beyond his reach, and he almost despaired of gaining his purpose till the rebellion of '98 opened a new field to this cunning plotter. He cared nothing for the party he appeared to serve, and for which he readily staked his life; he thought nothing of that, as long as

he saw a prospect of serving his own views. As to religion, he had none. If his views or his projects could be obtained by serving the Protestant cause, he professed to be a Protestant; he was cruel and savage by nature, and these propensities he fully gratified in his career as a rebel leader. He sought the earliest opportunity of leading a large force into Connaught, and took up a strong position amongst the mountains of the Benlevy range. He then communicated with his old associates, George Hamilton and Gorman O'More. Gorman was never intended for a rebel leader, for like his uncle Hamilton, he was a coward; though he was not to be persuaded into joining the insurgents in person, he was quite willing to plot to decoy Magnus O'More into McCormac's power, and also to carry off the heir of Courtown. Hamilton, who in his heart bitterly hated his niece, kept to himself his plots against her happiness.

To do Mr. O'More justice, bad as he was, he would never have permitted his daughter to be in the hands, or to become the wife of a ruffian such

as Roland McCormac. Hamilton, who had hated Magnus from his infancy, and longed to destroy him, worked upon McCormac's savage nature, by pointing him out to him as his rival, said that Norah was only to be won by threatening the life of her lover, and this and several other similar reasonings led to the capture of Norah, the child, and Magnus O'More, through the agency of Rooney, a domestic in Courtown Castle.

It was Hamilton's intention—as he accompanied the men on the expedition—to entrap Norah, and ensure the death of our hero and the child; but Roland McCormac was not quite so blind to Hamilton's designs as he thought; and, as leader of the men, he sent Arthur Botten—a wild and profligate youth in many things, but of good birth and good education. A chance circumstance had enabled McCormac to save his life, and Arthur became his tool in many things; but cruel or brutal he was not. McCormac told Botten, should they be successful in entrapping their victims, on no account to let Hamilton or the men kill either

O'More or the child, but to bring them safe to the camp at Benlevy. He did so, but the next day he was sent for by McCormac, who was some miles distant, collecting a stronger force, hoping to attack Galway.

So far all had succeeded according to Roland McCormac's wishes. He had Norah in his power, and he resolved to work upon her gentle nature by threatening the lives of O'More and the child. What he would do with them afterwards he had not made up his mind, but escape from his hands, he swore O'More should not. Curious to behold his captive—the lover of Norah—when he reached the tower he took Hamilton and his ferocious Lieutenant Rory-the-Red with him, and proceeded, as related, into the chamber where O'More was confined. He no sooner, however, beheld him, and scanned his face and person with a keen and jealous eye, than he swore, after he had, through him, accomplished his purpose, he should die.

"Is this the person?" said Roland McCormac,

turning to Hamilton, who was leaning against the doorway, for he had continued drinking after leaving Norah, and drink affected his emaciated limbs, though it left his vicious nature at full play. "Is this the person pretending to the name and estates of the O'Mores ?"

Before Hamilton could reply, our hero advanced close to the rebel leader. "I know not who you are, but I presume you are the leader of these misguided men, and your name McCormac. Whatever my pretensions to the O'More estates may be, I hold the rank of commander in his Majesty's Royal Navy. I am quite aware, in capturing me, that you are actuated by personal feelings ; not induced to commit the outrage to benefit the cause you espouse, however misguided and ill-judged it may be."

"We don't want your judgment upon our cause," interrupted McCormac, with a taunting laugh, "we don't acknowledge your king, and your rank is nothing to us. The mere fact of the case is this : you are wanted for a certain

purpose, and as we happen to be the strongest party, we will make use of you. You, it appears, have thought proper to aspire to the hand of Miss O'More. So have I. Ah! you start. You perceive that I assert facts. In love and war, we use stratagem. As my rival, you were in the way. I now hold you, the lady I covet, and the heir of Courtown in my power. Therefore, I have the advantage, and intend to use it. I hope to have the pleasure in a day or two of calling Miss O'More, Mrs. Colonel McCormac."

Before the words were well spoken, McCormac was in the grasp of the enraged and outraged O'More, and actually lifted up and hurled against Hamilton, knocking him with violence down the stone stairs. Rory the Red was at first so thunderstruck, that, though he drew his pistol from his belt, he did not venture to fire till O'More threw the rebel chief from him, and then he fired, the bullet deeply grazing our hero's shoulder. Numbers of men rushed up the stairs, and in two minutes Captain O'More would have been brutally

murdered, had not Roland McCormac, as he rose, bruised and bleeding from a wound over the temple, shouted out,

"Fools! stand back; are you mad? Do you think the mere death of this man by your pikes sufficient to gratify the revenge of Roland McCormac?"

O'More stood erect, his noble and powerful frame swelling with indignation and passion, ready to meet his doom. But McCormac's commands stayed the advance of the rebels. One look of ferocious hate, of unutterable malice, he cast upon O'More, the blood trickling down his face, which he dashed off with his hand, and then he left the room.

The door closed, and again O'More remained alone, the heat drops of agony—agony of mind to which bodily torture was as nought—rolling down his cheeks.

"Merciful God!" he exclaimed, "am I dreaming?" and he pressed his hands to his pallid brow. "Norah, the pure, the noble hearted, the

generous Norah, to become the prey of a fiend like McCormac! Oh, my poor girl, for what sorrow did I rescue you from the waters of the lake, where thy spotless form would have reposed, unsullied, uncontaminated?—for what? To become the prey of a ruthless villain!"

For more than an hour he remained perfectly overcome. He paid not the slightest attention to the blood that was flowing down his arm from the wound in his shoulder, and forming a pool on the floor at his feet. For once in his life, his spirit, his energy, and hopefulness seemed gone. At that moment one of the rebels might have entered the chamber and killed him without his offering the slightest resistance. In this state he remained all night; but towards morning, by a great effort, he mastered the mental torture that oppressed him. No ray of hope for himself entered his mind; he considered his fate decided. But it was yet possible, he thought, that Norah might escape the destiny intended her. He could not, of course, divine how; but he

believed that Providence would yet, through human means, interpose to save purity and innocence from the atrocious designs of an inhuman villain.

In the meantime, Norah and the child remained inmates of the cabin, with only the old woman for attendant. Norah, finding that Lizzy did not return, inquired of the dame where she was, and when she would come home?

"No, avick," said the old woman. "She will not return. She is gone with her husband to another part of the country, and won't come back."

This was sad news for poor Norah and the child, who evidently began to pine at his confinement, and his little spirits to fail, though Norah, with her own heart sick and sore, and her thoughts painful to a degree, did all she could to render his confinement less irksome. The old woman became sulky, and merely answered "Yes," or "No," to any questions asked. From the small, miserable window of the cabin

—not much more than a foot and a-half square —Norah could catch a glimpse of a wild rocky mountain range. She frequently beheld parties of men in uniform of green, with pike and musket, pass the window. The fifth day, however, was not to pass without incidents, for towards midday the door was opened by the old woman, to a loud and hasty knock. The next instant Roland McCormac and her uncle entered the room, closing the door after them.

Norah at the first glance recognized McCormac, and her heart beat with such violence that she feared she should faint; but with a prayer to God to give her strength, she summoned all her powers of endurance to her aid, and to a certain extent succeeded. She sat pale and anxious, but betraying, apparently, no very great emotion. Francis was fast asleep in the next room.

McCormac for a moment stood regarding our heroine earnestly, whilst her miserable uncle, who walked lame, seated himself on the bench—the

old woman, as was her wont, retiring into the room where the child was.

"Your uncle, Miss O'More," commenced Roland McCormac, speaking calmly, and in as gentle a manner as he could assume, "your uncle, some days ago, stated to you my proposals. I purposely left you a short period, in which to compose your thoughts, and enable you clearly to understand your own situation and the situation of others depending on your determination. What you know of me is not much; but that little will no doubt convince you that I am not at all a man likely to be turned aside from a purpose once resolved upon. May I now request to know your decision?"

"I can only wonder," returned Norah, mastering every emotion save indignation, "that you could ever dare to make so monstrous a proposition, or to imagine that any lapse of time could alter my mind. I can suffer death, and for that I am prepared."

"My dear girl," interrupted McCormac, with a brutal laugh, and a look of insolent licentiousness and mockery, "how can you entertain such an idea as that? I would not injure, let alone see perish, so much loveliness and innocence. My wife I am resolved you shall be. If I have delayed this ceremony, it was through delicacy, not wishing to use force when persuasion might do. However, let us understand one another. To-morrow there will be a priest here to unite us. If you consent willingly, I will set the man who has presumed to call himself your lover at liberty, and restore the child to its mother. Now, mark me, if you refuse," and here he uttered a terrible oath, "I will bring out your would-be lover, and on a branch of yonder blasted oak I will hang him before your eyes; and with him shall perish the heir of Courtown. Moreover, your obstinacy will gain you nothing; for my wife you shall become the moment after, sensible or insensible. Now you know my resolve, and if you think that either prayers, entreaties,

tears, or curses will move me, you are mistaken," and turning on his heel he abruptly left the cabin, leaving Norah paralysed and ready to sink on the floor.

George Hamilton regarded the misery and prostration of his niece with malignant satisfaction. He was lame from the severe fall down the tower stairs, and besides being lame, he suffered from some severe bruises. In the vindictiveness and malice of his heart, he had entreated McCormac to put O'More at once to death by hanging. McCormac, though smarting under the blow, and boiling with passion at the indignity he had received before his men, was not at that moment to be persuaded to lose the advantage he supposed he had gained by threatening to take the life of O'More, to compel Norah to yield willingly into becoming his wife. The fact was McCormac was only a rebel to suit his own purposes. As great and as mean a scoundrel as ever existed, he intended, the moment he became the husband of Norah O'More,

not only to abandon his comrades, but also to sell them to the Government, and by certain revelations secure his own safety and fortune. He very well knew that Miss O'More was entitled to a large fortune, and that Magnus O'More and the heir of Courtown removed, the titles and estates of Courtown would revert to Norah's father. He considered that he was playing a safe game, most peculiarly assisted by the lawless state of the times.

"You see, Norah," observed Hamilton, when left alone with his niece, "you are making a very great fool of yourself, by thwarting such a man as Roland McCormac."

"Miserable wretch! disgrace to the name of christian!" exclaimed Norah, rising and rallying, with an effort, her prostrate strength. "I suffer more agony of mind in knowing that so heartless, so vile a man calls himself my uncle. Do you imagine that you will be a gainer by this rebel McCormac's actions? I tell you, wretched man that you are, that he will sell you, body and

soul. Can you for a moment suppose that you are anything but a tool and a dupe of that vile man? Oh, wretched, miserable being!" and Norah clasped her hands, and raised her beautiful eyes enthusiastically to heaven. "Thou hast yet a short span of life; a prophetic spirit tells me your doom will be a terrible one—persecutor of innocence from the cradle—thy last hours will be agonized, and thy death appalling," and half frenzied and maddened by thought, with her eyes flashing, and her long and luxuriant tresses streaming over her shoulders, in her agony of mind having broken the fillet that confined them, she rushed from the presence of her uncle, and entering the other room threw herself on the bed, almost bereft of her senses.

Hamilton gazed after her retreating form, appalled; he shook in every limb, and sat with the heat drops of agony and fear falling in beads from his pallid brow,—he was spell-bound, unable to move, the bench shook under him, and his teeth chattered. In his state of mind a[t]

that moment the words of Norah bore a prophetic meaning—the superstition of his country and the times had great power over him, and already he saw visions and terrible sights flitting before him;—he would have fallen to the earth had not the old woman entered the room. She looked at him with a strange look.

"Ah!" she muttered, "he has seen his fetch! faix, he won't be long a following," and, taking a bottle of spirits from the cupboard, she handed it to the miserable wretch saying, "whisky!" He seized it in his nerveless grasp, and with a horrible laugh put the bottle to his lips, and drank enough to stagger a strong man; he then laughed wildly, but, recovering his nerves in a wonderful manner, he exclaimed,

"Ha! I've been dreaming. It was not reality," and he took another draught, and then stood up, saying, in Irish, to the old woman—"So the captain's gone; he frightened the girl. Never mind, she will soon get over it. Faith, old woman, your whisky is very good; it's the best

physic a man can take when he's a bit shaky. I'm all right now," and, taking up his stick—for he could not walk without it—and casting a furtive glance at the door of the other room, he hobbled out of the cabin.

"Faix! acushla, machree, even the whisky won't keep you long on those miserable legs. What the likes of you wants amongst the boys, I can't think!" So closing and locking the door, she took a small drop from the bottle, held it up to the light, muttering to herself; she then lit her pipe, thrust her head up the chimney, and fell dreaming—of what? Very probably, of where the next bottle of whisky was to come from.

CHAPTER IX.

WHILST the scenes described in our last chapter were enacting amid the mountains and hills of Benlevy — the inhabitants of Ashgrove were not without their causes for excitement. The evening of the day that Mr. Gordon was knocked off his horse, and robbed of his papers, was that of the hunt ball, and all the gentlemen and ladies visiting at Ashgrove left early for Galway, Mr. O'More alone remaining; Mr. Hamilton had left a few days before, without telling any of the family where he was going— the fact was Mr. O'More was not quite aware of his unworthy brother-in-law's schemes; and if he had known to what extent he intended

carrying them out he would never have consented to be mixed up with them. He felt convinced that the heir of Courtown would die of consumption, and he bided his time. As to Magnus O'More's claims, he would not believe that he could ever establish them, but when he heard that Mr. Gordon had arrived at Courtown Castle, and that he was possessed of every requisite paper to establish the marriage of his brother, and consequently the legitimacy of the son, he began to be alarmed, and sent for his old cunning and wicked agent, McCann, who arrived the morning of the hunt ball, and was closeted for a couple of hours with Mr. O'More, and then and there they planned the attack upon Mr. Gordon—to rob him of his papers—for Mr. O'More had the day before received a polite note from the lawyer, stating that he would visit him the next day and submit to his inspection most important documents.

McCann,—a secret agent of the party opposed to the government, and who also corresponded

with France,—knew where to get agents to accomplish his designs upon Mr. Gordon, but singularly enough, they missed him on the way to Ashgrove. Imagining the lawyer would take the upper road—but having housed him in Ashgrove, and watched his departure—they made sure of him on his way back, and then dispersed, the principal man carrying the papers to McCann. That worthy shut himself up, and, with hands shaking from nervous excitement, eagerly untied the brown paper parcel containing the important papers. Two minutes' inspection showed him that they were all copies—not one original. He sunk back in his chair, with a look of dismay. The little attorney shook in his skin,—and a very bad skin it was, for very little shaking would shake him out of it.

"Cursed cunning old fellow! Ah! a deep old file, wouldn't trust himself in this part of the country with the originals; quite right, as it turned out. O'More will lose the estates, and

worse, my two thousand pounds are in jeopardy. Let me examine these papers, however."

In a very few minutes he was quite satisfied.

"I always thought so," he muttered, "and O'More must have thought so, too. He pretended he did not believe a word about the marriage. I must go to Ashgrove—it's a bad job; and, faith, this morning's news is bad also. The French fleet is dispersed, two ships taken, and Wexford in the hands of the royal troops, and the rebels—hem! the patriots I mean—flying in all directions." So, tying up the papers, the little man set out for Ashgrove.

Mr. O'More was impatiently awaiting his arrival in his study; he had read the news. He saw at once that the rising would be crushed by the government in a very short time, and congratulated himself that he had never in any way implicated himself in the insurrection. The moment McCann entered the library, he saw by his countenance that their plot was a failure.

"You have let him escape; you have missed him," cried Mr. O'More, savagely.

"No," returned the attorney, pursing up his under lip, "I'm not apt to fail in anything I undertake. Remember the thirteen acres of bog, ten to one against me—I won it."

"Yes. Curse the thirteen acres," returned Mr. O'More, bitterly; "I remember them to my cost, they lost me a coronet."

"They lost you nothing," returned McCann, coolly.

"Why, the old lord would never have married if I had lost those worthless acres."

"Well, what then?" said the attorney; "you would not have benefited. This Magnus O'More would have inherited the title and estates."

"What do you mean?"

"Why, here are the papers taken from old Gordon. Nay, you needn't clutch them? they are only copies."

Mr. O'More sank back in his seat, glaring at

the little attorney, who now knowing all was lost became in a manner reckless.

"The old fellow, Gordon," continued McCann, "was not to be caught bringing into this country such valuable documents. It is all up; your nephew's title to the name and estates are unquestionable."

"Curse him and you too," said O'More, heedlessly. "If I had known this I might have made most favourable terms. Old Gordon was willing to grant me any terms. It seems this commander in the navy—"

"Do you mean Magnus Roderick O'More?" said the attorney, maliciously.

"Of course I do," returned Mr. O'More, snappishly. "He is now at Courtown Castle, and so is my daughter. I have found out that they have met before, and that there is or is likely to be an attachment between them, and that, for the sake of my daughter, my nephew is willing to sacrifice his claims to the estate during my life."

"The devil he is," interrupted the little attorney, with his eyes wide open, and looking at Mr. O'More with astonishment. "Will you insure me my two thousand pounds in consideration of—"

"Of course I will; but how can I undo what I so foolishly did this morning? I treated Mr. Gordon with insulting contempt; besides he has been, as you say, knocked on the head and robbed. Of course he will say I had a hand in it."

"Pooh! that's nothing," interrupted McCann. "If the young people are in love they won't trouble much about old Gordon's having a bump on his head more than nature gave him. Get him to leave you the Ashgrove estate for life, pay off the three thousand mortgage, make no demand for the amount your daughter is entitled to, and you will then acknowledge him as your lawful nephew, and give him your daughter in marriage. By St. Patrick! a splendid bargain—that is," added the attorney, pressing

his lips hard, "if the young man is fool enough to do it for the sake of a pretty girl's face. You must write at once to Mr. Gordon, and apologise, and say you were heated and intemperate, deeply regret it, etc.; and request another interview."

At that moment Mr. O'More and the attorney were attracted by the sound of a horse's feet galloping up the avenue; the moment after both turned pale, and looked exceedingly startled, for an orderly of the —— Dragoons, quartered at the barracks some five miles from Ashgrove, galloped up to the door, his horse all in a lather of foam.

"What's the matter? what can bring one of those murdering dragoons here?" exclaimed McCann, rising, and looking exceedingly uneasy.

The dragoon had dismounted, and a servant had answered his summons. He handed in a note, instantly mounted, and galloped as rapidly down the avenue as he had come up. The servant the next instant entered the room looking quite frightened.

"Here's a note, sir, from Captain Hare. The dragoon says, sir, that there has been a young gentleman, a navy officer I believe, sir, murdered at Courtown Castle, and Miss O'More and young Lord Courtown carried off."

Mr. O'More fell back in his chair looking ghastly, he could not stretch out his hand to take the note. The little attorney seized it eagerly, and handed it to Mr. O'More with a very significant look, who having dismissed the astounded domestic, with trembling hands opened the missive. He was indeed beginning to feel that a guilty conscience cannot always sleep. The family of O'More were intimate with Captain Hare; he visited at Ashgrove. The note contained only a a few lines as follows—

"My Dear Sir,

"I deeply regret having to tell you that Miss O'More and the young heir of Courtown have been carried off by some miscreants, and a Captain O'More, an officer in the navy, in

defending them, is supposed to have been killed, and his body thrown into the lake. Nothing certain is known. You may depend on my exerting myself to the utmost, to rescue Miss O'More and the child.

"Yours, in great haste,

"W. HARE."

Mr. McCann had taken the liberty to read this note over his patron's shoulder.

"Here's news with a vengeance!" he exclaimed, sinking into a seat, and staring with a look of profound amazement, and at the same time suspicion at Mr. O'More; "and you knew nothing of this, eh?" he asked, enquiringly.

"What should I know of it?" said Mr. O'More, bewildered. "You can see I am more terrified than anything else."

"Faith," said McCann, recovering himself, "this is a bold game," and he lowered his voice to a whisper, "of your brother-in-law."

Mr. O'More started to his feet, turning deadly pale, saying,

"Impossible; it's madness!"

"Not at all, in the present state of the country; before all returns to order again it will be forgotten, or if thought of, be set down as one of the many outrages committed by the rebels, or patriots, as we call them."

"I call them nothing of the kind, Mr. McCann, whatever you may. I do not believe, strange as it may appear, that Hamilton has anything to do with this affair. Why carry off my daughter?"

"Well, it strikes me," said McCann, "as a very well contrived scheme; there's an end of young O'More's claims, if he has been thrown into the lake; and the young heir of Courtown has but a poor chance of revisiting his father's halls. But what will you do about Miss O'More?"

"What can I do?" returned the perplexed and not very affectionate father. "If anybody has a

chance of discovering the ruffians that carried them off, the dragoons will; we must wait."

"But surely," said McCann, with a sneer, and a bit of malice in his tone; "surely you ought to send a message to the castle and condole with Lady Courtown on the loss of the heir and your daughter's abduction. If you take no steps in this matter, it will be thought very extraordinary."

"I have not seen Lady Courtown since her marriage. We do not speak. In my opinion this is a most untoward event, coupled with the attack on Mr. Gordon; suspicion will connect one with the other."

"Pooh! not a bit; look at the state of the country. People have something else to think of; whole families are flying."

"Nevertheless, they hunt and give balls in Galway," said Mr. O'More.

"We have not felt it yet in this county, though they say the French will effect a landing; and that there is a large body of insurgents under a

Captain, or Colonel McCormac, marching into this county."

"What name was that you mentioned?" questioned Mr. O'More, with a start. "I have heard Gorman mention that man; indeed, I have some recollection of being introduced somewhere in Dublin to a Colonel Roland McCormac."

"That's the man," returned the attorney; "he is a famous leader of the insurgents. They do say he burned a lot of men, women, and children in a barn, and as they tried to escape his men pitched them back into the flames with their pikes. They were all heretics, of course."

"Good Heavens! McCann, how can you talk so coolly of such atrocities?" exclaimed Mr. O'More, though not looking particularly affected; "but what strikes me is this—I heard Gorman make some remarks about this same McCormac, alluding to my daughter, that startled me at the time. Now it is not impossible, if this bold insurgent took it into his head, he may be the abductor of my daughter and the child."

"What would he do with the child?" returned the attorney, thoughtfully. "Pray was your brother-in-law acquainted particularly with this McCormac?"

Mr. O'More coloured a little. "Yes," he replied, "he was. There was some money transaction, a duel, or some mystification between them, that I never understood rightly. I know Gorman shot some young man in a duel; but these sort of things were so common at that time, and, indeed, are so still, that no notice was taken of it,—Gorman was very foolish and inconsiderate,—joined the clubs; in fact, made a great fool of himself, but he is keeping clear of all parties now."

"I shall return home," said the attorney, "and wait events; but I am strongly of opinion you had better send a mounted messenger to Courtown to make enquiries at least, and find out whether Captain O'More's body has been found."

After the departure of McCann, Mr. O'More sat for some moments in deep, and, in truth, very

painful thought. How rapidly we can trace back, through long years ; with what vividness scenes and individuals, long numbered with the past, rise before us ; how we shudder when we think and permit our consciences to reproach us for acts buried in oblivion to the world's eye. What would we not give to be able to say—I can look back without a sigh of regret; I have injured no one in thought or word. But who is there that can, like the Pharisee, laud himself in that manner? Whether in that short half-hour Mr. O'More so communed with himself,—whether he, like the Publican, humbled himself before God,—we know not ; the secret of men's thoughts are in their actions. Suddenly he pulled the table towards him, took pen and paper, and wrote two letters rapidly ; then rung his bell—his own man answered the summons.

"Tell James to saddle a horse, and take these two letters to Courtown Castle, and wait for a reply."

After partaking of a cup of coffee, he remained

writing and examining various papers and documents he took from an iron chest.

About nine o'clock the messenger returned from Courtown Castle with a letter from Mr. Gordon; before breaking the seal he asked James several questions,—he was very pale, but quite calm. "Has the body of Captain O'More been found?"

"No, sir; it is now thought he was carried off, not murdered; at all events the lake has been dragged, with no result, for full a mile every way —two of the villains were killed by him, but they are not men belonging to this county."

"Has any intelligence of Miss O'More or the child been heard?"

"Not when I left, sir; her ladyship is distracted, and Mr. Gordon, sir, has been knocked down, and hurt, and robbed of valuable papers, and his money and watch."

"Most extraordinary!" said Mr. O'More, in a slightly tremulous voice; "you may retire."

For several minutes he refrained from opening

Mr. Gordon's letters, and appeared to dread the contents. At length he broke the seal, and began reading.

"SIR,—

"I cannot say much at this present moment, when all is obscure. If it will relieve your mind, rest satisfied that I believe you; for what occurred to me, I most cordially forgive you, and I think if it pleases God to restore those lost to us, your object may be accomplished without any difficulty. Your determination is a most sensible one, and you will in after years know that peace of mind which passes all understanding.

"Yours truly.

"HERBERT GORDON."

"N. B.—Phelim McFarlane, the attached follower of Captain O'More, arrived here this morning,—he has left again, vowing to discover his master, or perish in the attempt."

It was very late that night when Mr. O'More retired to rest;—he slept little, but appeared less depressed, and anxiously waited the return of his family. About twelve o'clock he saw the chariot coming up the avenue; as it arrived at the door, he was surprised to see only Mrs. O'More and her special attendant leave the carriage;—he had left word that he wished to see her in the library. Mrs. O'More came with a rapid step; entered the room, agitated, flushed, and her eyes sparkling with indignation.

"Good God! what is the matter, Ellen? You look excited; have you heard of Norah?"

"Yes, yes, that detestable girl has brought naught but sorrow to our house—Sir James Boriden has been killed in a duel with that firebrand O'Kelly, and all on Norah's account."

"Killed!" exclaimed Mr. O'More, looking horrified, and trembling with agitation. "Killed! impossible!"

"It's not impossible, Mr. O'More," exclaimed the lady, almost fiercely. "If he's not dead,

he's mortally wounded, and I think that's quite as bad."

"No, my dear," said Mr. O'More, mildly, "whilst there's life there's hope. God forbid he should die."

"Why, what's the matter with you, John; you look as if you had not slept the whole night, what's the matter?"

"I have very bad intelligence, my dear; our daughter has been carried off by—"

"Stuff and nonsense," interrupted Mrs. O'More, "you do not believe, surely, in such a trumpery story. The girl has gone off with that impostor, calling himself O'More; why, it was this news, reaching some one at the supper after the ball, that led to the duel. Sir James, who was sitting with Miss Lynch, close to that O'Kelly, heard it; he laughed, it is true, and perhaps a little heated with wine, and annoyed by Norah's unhandsome treatment of him, he thoughtlessly reflected on Irish ladies, and ended by saying, "That perhaps

Miss O'More was right, for this bold captain was full a head taller than himself."

"Good heaven! how could so absurd a report reach any one's ears? Captain O'More is supposed to be murdered. He killed two of the men employed to carry off Norah; and young Lord Courtown is also missing—"

"You do not say such is the case," said Mrs. O'More, in an unmistakable tone of joyful excitement, that caused her husband to sigh. "Why then, if that fellow is no more, and the child gone, you—"

"Ellen, Ellen," said Mr. O'More, "for God's sake listen. But first tell me what happened when Sir James Boriden cast that insulting insinuation on our child's reputation."

"Oh, her reputation's safe enough; do not be alarmed; she has become very suddenly quite an immaculate creature in your eyes. However, no sooner had Sir James Boriden made use of the language he did, than Arthur O'Kelly sprang

from his seat, and amidst the screams of the ladies, and the hurrahs of the gentlemen, he seized Sir James by the collar, and, as he refused to retract his words, actually hauled him out of the room, saying, 'That any person using such language, reflecting on the purity of the Irish ladies, and especially casting an insulting slur upon a young lady who was so generally and universally beloved for her virtues as Miss O'More, was unfit for the company of ladies or gentlemen.' Sir James sent a message by Gorman, very early next morning, and they met an hour afterwards. The first shot O'Kelly was wounded in the side. He then desired his second to say if Sir James would make an apology, he was satisfied. Sir James replied 'He would make up his mind after another shot, being the first time he ever missed his man.' 'Then,' said Mr. O'Kelly, 'he has brought his fate on himself,' and Sir James fell, the surgeon declares mortally wounded."

"Sir James Boriden," said Mr. O'More, "has been the cause of his own misfortune; his conduct

was highly insulting, partaking of the hospitality of a country, and to endeavour to throw a slur upon the daughter of the man under whose roof he was hospitably entertained. I wish now, Ellen," continued Mr. O'More seriously, "to let you know our real position. I have written to Mr. Gordon, saying that I am prepared to deliver over the O'More estates to my nephew, Roderick Magnus O'More."

"Are you losing your senses, Mr. O'More," exclaimed his lady, starting from her seat, her eyes flashing, and her cheek and neck crimson with indignation. "You do not surely presume to tell me to my face that this illegitimate offspring of your brother is the nephew you speak of. Do you thus coolly endeavour to rob your son of his just inheritance?"

"I am afraid, Ellen," said Mr. O'More, sadly, "that, in your secret heart, you believe him to be my lawful nephew."

"Fiddlesticks about secret hearts and thoughts, when an estate of seven thousand a year is at

stake,—what matter what any one thought; their thoughts would not dispossess you of the property."

"No, Ellen," returned Mr. O'More, "I do not pretend to sudden sanctity,—those rapid changes are seldom lasting. I yield to necessity, and a desire to save my family from being crushed altogether by a mad and fruitless opposition; that I have committed a great crime in driving my nephew from his lawful inheritance, I do not deny, but still the law would hold me to a certain extent guiltless, for I really had no proofs of my brother's marriage with the Spanish grandee's daughter; though I believed in my heart my brother's solemn declaration that they were married previously to their arrival in Ireland. Taking the advantage the law gave me, I retained the property."

"And a pretty fool you would have made of yourself but for my brother George, who has sacrificed all for your aggrandisement."

"Sacrificed all, my dear?" repeated Mr.

O'More, with a curl of the lip. "You seem to forget, Ellen, he did not possess a shilling to bless himself with when we were married, and a few months after I paid seven hundred pounds to his creditors, to save him from a debtor's cell."

"He paid you well, however, for the few paltry hundreds; did he not take all the trouble in the world to get rid of that hateful child?"

"He did, he did," said Mr. O'More with a shudder, "and mark how signally the Almighty has defeated man's efforts to rob the orphan. Had that boy been kindly and tenderly cared for, reared up, and provided with a suitable situation in life, he would never have dreamed of hunting up rights he would have known nothing of at his tender years. He became an officer in the navy, was cast upon the coast of Spain, and was nearly condemned to death."

"I wish he had been executed," muttered the unfeeling, worldly-minded woman, who heard every word her husband uttered with a fierce, malignant spirit tugging at her heart.

"He was saved through the agency of his own grandfather, the Duke de Cabra, who, it appears, from some cause, relented, and finally acknowledged him as his lawful grandson, and sent him back to his own ship, with every necessary document to establish his mother's marriage with my brother. There are the papers,—nay, don't start up; they are not the originals, I thought they were; I had Mr. Gordon stopped and robbed, and he was nearly killed. He now knows who had him waylaid and robbed."

Mrs. O'More was alarmed. She fell back on her chair, panting for breath, and pale as death.

"Knows that it was you who had him waylaid and robbed?" she gasped out. "My God!" and she covered her face with her hands. Her passion was gone, fear, abject fear, replaced the tempest.

"Yes," returned Mr. O'More, glad to perceive some prospect of getting her to see their real position.

"Yes, I wrote to Mr. Gordon, confessed the

fact, said I repented the past, which I do; offered every assistance in my power to place my nephew in his proper position, and used other words, all tending to the same purpose."

"But," exclaimed Mrs. O'More, again resuming her vitality, "have you not acted like a madman? Why betray yourself?—suppose this detestable young man is killed or drowned, as they say he is?"

"Well, if he is, I hold the estates unquestioned. Of this act of carrying off my daughter and the child I am perfectly innocent in word or deed. If I had waited till I heard my nephew's death confirmed, I could not have been free from the suspicion of that foolish robbery of the papers, for rash and foolish it was; but I have been a slave to bad advisers. McCann put me up to that. However, Mr. Gordon answered my letter and has kindly and freely forgiven me, and said that no doubt, when Mr. O'More was found, things would be amicably arranged."

"And pray on what are we to live, Mr. O'More,

when the estates are given up?" asked Mrs. O'More, snappishly. "You do not seem to think of mine or Hamilton's sufferings."

"You wrong me, Ellen, I do think of the reverse you will experience; but, thank goodness, I never touched or mortgaged one shilling of the seven hundred a year I possessed when I married you; we have that still."

"Seven hundred a year," almost screamed Mrs. O'More. "And you imagine a woman of my habits can live on such a miserable pittance as seven hundred pounds a year; why, it's not enough to pay Gorman's tailor's bill."

"Then Gorman had better change places with his tailor," replied Mr. O'More, bitterly. "Your father lived and reared his children on half that sum, and a woman without a shilling of portion may, after all, not consider a man with seven hundred pounds a year such a bad match. At all events, such is the state of affairs till Captain O'More makes his appearance. What I fear and dread is, that your brother George

and that ruffian McCormac are the real actors in the carrying off of my daughter and the child, and Captain O'More, if they took him alive."

Mrs. O'More again turned crimson, and then became greatly agitated.

"What makes you imagine George to be concerned in this affair?" said Mrs O'More, "he's always very cautious; and though he would risk his life for our aggrandisement, and the punishment of that hatetul treacherous, Lady Courtown, whom he most cordially hates, still—" and she looked enquiringly at her husband.

"In our present state of affairs, Ellen," said Mr. O'More, very seriously, "concealment of anything, the one from the other, is dangerous to a degree. If you really know anything of your brother's movements, tell me, that I may be guarded against consequences."

Mrs. O'More thought for a moment, and then said, "I cannot exactly say I know all his movements and intentions, but I know he is amazingly annoyed that you persist in not in any way

joining with the party of gallant men who will assuredly rescue their country from the detested yoke of the Eng lish."

"Assuredly get their necks into a halter," said Mr. O'More. "I never had but one opinion, and I thank goodness your brother was never able to shake that."

Mrs. O'More thought differently, however. She had become more manageable, for at heart she was frightened; she therefore said,—

"A few days, perhaps a fortnight ago, he received a letter from his friend, who is now one of the principal leaders of the patriots."

"You mean McCormac, of course?"

"Yes, Colonel McCormac; he told him he had a force of eight hundred men under him, and was marching to join General ———, in the county of Galway; that the French fleet would land some thousands of men, either in Bantry or Kinmore soon, and a blow would be struck that would free Ireland for ever, and requested him (Hamilton) to join him at ———, which is not more than twenty

miles from Courtown Castle. 'What a glorious revenge I now may have,' exclaimed George, when he read the letter. 'Suppose I was to surprise Courtown Castle, swamp that perfidious woman and her brat, and cut off this Captain O'More. One hundred men of McCormac's force would do it. I have a good spy in the service of her ladyship as it is.' I can tell you no more on this subject, for that is all he said, and the day after he went off very suddenly."

"That's quite sufficient," said Mr. O'More, with a sigh. "I have never shown much affection for my daughter, nor have you; we have both misunderstood or been purposely blind to her noble and generous nature. Nevertheless, we must, and shall, feel the terrible blow if Providence does not interfere, when we know that she has been sacrificed to the terrible projects of such a man as McCormac."

"Do you think Hamilton would permit her to be sacrificed or insulted?" said Mrs. O'More, not seeming to care much about it.

"What would his opposition avail, even if he offers it, to the power of such a man, the leader of a band of desperate, reckless men."

"A pretty position we have come to," said Mrs O'More, getting quite overcome with the thoughts of the misery and trouble there was before them, and not a little frightened besides. She was a faint-hearted, weak, vain, heartless woman, living only for show and display, having no resources in herself, and no real affection for anyone but her brother.

Thus we leave the O'Mores of Ashgrove for the present, to follow other characters in our tale, of more humble fortunes, but with hearts true as steel.

CHAPTER X.

PHELIM MCFARLANE arrived at Courtown Castle on the day of the abduction of Miss O'More, the young lord, and his master. He was overwhelmed with dismay, and for the moment bewildered. He then said to himself,

"This must be the old fiend at Ashgrove, again at work, to put my master and the child out of the way; and be gor! if he even sacrificed his daughter to gain his purpose, deuce a hair the old devil would care."

Whilst all in the castle were in a state of intense confusion and alarm, making a thousand guesses at the way and the mode the young people had been carried off, Phelim proceeded to

critically examine the place where the event occurred. Half-an-hour's examination fully satisfied the sailor that the party were carried off in a boat, though the trampling of many feet could be traced for more than half-a-mile along the shore of the lake, and then across a ploughed field. This track Phelim abandoned, and returning to the quay shoved into the water a small punt, and taking a couple of oars, though it was getting dusk, glided rapidly up the lake towards the other shore. About three miles up he pulled into the beach, just below a neat cottage with a boat hauled up close to it, and fishing nets hanging to a lot of poles. There was a light in the cottage window, and when Phelim knocked, the door was opened by as pretty a colleen, of some nineteen or twenty years, as any in the whole county. She was simply but neatly dressed; her hair, of a rich brown, was tied up by a simple piece of blue ribbon, rivalled in colour by a pair of clear, liquid, eyes.

When the light she carried flashed upon

Phelim's bold but handsome features the girl uttered a cry, but not a cry of fear, for her blue eyes sparkled, her blooming cheek became more crimson, as she exclaimed,

"Oh, Phelim, is it you?"

"My own self, Kathleen mavourneen," and Phelim's arm was round Kathleen's waist, and a kiss—the sound, like an exploded pistol, and no mistake, betraying its genuineness.

"Tare an' ages! what's that?" said a loud manly voice from inside. "Kate, who the devil's kissing you?" and out walked a strapping young fellow, with about three feet of black thorn, grasped by the middle, and giving it a flourish by no means pleasant to contemplate, knowing yourself to be the intended recipient. But seeing Phelim, away went the stick, and with a hearty hurrah! he clasped both the visitor's hands, shaking them with so hearty a good will that any other less muscular biped than Phelim would have had a chance of dislocation of the arm joints.

"Arrah! mon diaoul!" he exclaimed, "where have you come from, McFarlane, and at this hour? The old woman is abed, but my wife, and Kathleen, and myself will give you a thousand welcomes. Bedad!" he added, laughing, "when I heard the kiss, like the bang of a blunderbuss, says I, 'be the holy father, he's a bould chap to salute Kathleen after that fashion.'"

After closing the door, and bolting it, all three entered the room to the left, a large and exceedingly comfortable kitchen, well furnished in its simple fashion; plenty of shining pewter plates, a large dresser full of delf, and a roaring coal fire in the wide chimney, whilst from the rafters hung sundry tempting looking hams, pieces of bacon, and dried pork. A young woman was busy cutting slices off a fine piece of bacon, and a bowl of eggs by its side showed that the preparations for a cottage supper were good and substantial.

After sundry questions and shaking of hands, the two young women continued the preparations

for supper, Kathleen, when she could, stealing a look at her lover, and sure to catch his glance in so doing.

"Well, Tim," said Phelim, as he and his old playfellow and comrade in early days sat beside a small table, with a black bottle and a couple of glasses. "Not till after supper, Tim," said Phelim, stopping the pouring out of the whisky, "I have a deal of trouble on my mind, as you shall hear; but where's your brother Andy, Kathleen alanna?"

"He ought to be in by this time, Phelim. He saw a strange boat going up the lake with sail and oar, to-day, and you know Andy is very curious, so as his nets were hung up he took a shot up the lake to watch where she went. He said that there were many people in her."

"By the powers of Moll Kelly, I'm on the track," said Phelim; "that's the boat."

A loud knock at the door induced Tim to get up and open it, and in walked Andy Groggan, a fine specimen of a young giant.

Andy and Kathleen, when children, were especial favourites of Phelim, when he himself was a boy of twelve or thirteen. They were twins. Their father was a small farmer on the Ashgrove estate, and their farm adjoined the McFarlane's. Now let English gentry say what they please,—and they please very often to say very ill-natured things of poor Paddy and his country. But let that be bygones; what I was going to say is, that even in Ireland there are small farmers who live decently and respectably, keep their land and their cattle in good order, and their homes tidy and pleasant to look at. The McFarlanes and the Groggans were examples of the thrifty class of cottage farmers with their eight or ten cows, and sixty or eighty acres of land.

When Mr O'More took possession of the estate, after his brother's death, his eye fell upon the two little farms of McFarlane and Groggan. McFarlane defied him, but poor Groggan, after a useless contest, was forced to give

up. He then took the farm on the borders of the lake, opposite, or rather some four miles up to the westward, where he died. His widow still lived, and the two sons, Tim and Andy, continued to keep the farm, Kathleen, as Phelim's future wife, living with them. Andy, being a kind of universal genius, added fishing to his other occupations; he was fond of sport of all kinds, and full of fun and good nature. Both brothers doted on their sister Kathleen, and she certainly was as pretty a colleen of her class as any in Ireland. She had gone to school, and could read, write, and cipher. Loving Phelim in her childhood, her love had increased with her growth, and Bessy McFarlane was proud of her brother's intended bride, and many a present, and costly ones too, arrived from foreign parts for pretty Kathleen Groggan.

After the bacon and eggs had been disposed of, the three men commenced at the black bottle of whisky. At this period of our tale, minute

details are wearisome, as indeed they are at all times. It will be sufficient to say the whole family became deeply interested in the fate of Miss O'More, the child, and Captain O'More. From what Andy saw, and as far as he could make out, the party in the boat that passed up the lake in the morning were, no doubt, the abductors of our heroine.

By gaining an elevated and projecting point, jutting into the Lough, Andy had marked the boat making for the wild shores below Benleve, and he also knew that a large body of men from a neighbouring county had encamped amongst the defiles and glens of Benlen. These were rebels, and many others were joining them from all parts of the country. It required very little persuasion from Phelim to induce Andy Groggan to join him. With a couple of old muskets, and some slight changes of attire, they resolved to penetrate into the rebel camp, discover whether those they sought were held captives there, and by whom, and then watch an opportunity of

deserting the band. Kathleen looked sad at this, as she thought, wild scheme, but she merely observed, with an affectionate look at Phelim, "Why not set the military at once to invest the place; the Lord save us! if they only suspected you were not rebels, they'd murder you."

"Oh, by the powers, my darling," said Phelim, "that's not so easily done. I'll make a famous rebel for a few days. I'll get hold of a fiddle, and if I don't set the whole brood of them a footing it, blow me. But you see, Kathleen darling, if I was to tell the dragoons that I thought the rebels were there, they would never think of attacking such a force without being assisted by an infantry regiment; so time would be lost. I heard at the castle that the dragoon officer said that two regiments were expected from Limerick, and then no doubt they will march against the rebels."

The next morning, well disguised, and each armed with an old brushed-up musket and a horse-pistol a-piece, Phelim and Andy Groggan

set out for Benleve, in order to become rebels for a time, a rather dangerous exploit.

But Phelim McFarlane never knew what fear was, and Andy Groggan, though scarcely twenty-one, cared as little for the risk he ran as needs be. They jogged on together along the borders of the lake for several miles, stopping about midday to eat their bread and cold bacon, and smoke their pipes.

"If we meet the sodgers, Phelim, in this trim," said Groggan, knocking the ashes out of his pipe, and filling a thimble-full of whiskey out of a pint bottle he had stowed away in his great long frieze coat, "What 'ud we be after saying to them?"

"Faix, that we were going to deliver my master, Captain O'More"

"Be dad! I heard 'em say in Galway market, last Tuesday, that the devil a question the sodgers asks at all, but when they catches a rebel they sticks him up and shoots him down at onst; be gor, it's not fair, is it, Phelim?"

"Why, as to that, Andy, I can't say as how it

is ship-shape, anyhow, but dickens a sodger we'll meet on these hills. So now let us square our yards, and top our booms."

Strong, powerful men, they traversed the wild heights and valleys with an untiring step, till just as it was growing duskish, a rough voice called out, "Stand," in Irish, and looking in the direction of the voice, they perceived four muskets levelled at them from a range of rocks, some half-dozen yards before them.

"Stand it is," said Phelim coolly, placing the butt of his musket on the ground, and taking out his pipe began to fill it. Presently the muzzles of the muskets were removed, and four men showed themselves over the rocks.

"Just be after laying your muskets on the ground, and come here," said one of the men.

"Put down your weapon," said Phelim to Andy, "and come along."

They approached the men seated on the rocks, who gazed on the two tall, powerful men approaching with surprise.

One of the four men was smoking a short

pipe, they all wore frieze coats, with belts, and muskets and pistols, and were a wild, fierce-looking lot, all Tipperary men.

Phelim walked calmly up to the man with the pipe, with a "God save you neighbour, here's success," and lighting his pipe, he took a good whiff, whilst Andy, taking out the bottle and cracked cup, offered a drop of the "creature" to the man nearest them. In five minutes the six were sitting as comfortably as if their acquaintance was of long standing.

"From what part of the country do yez come?" said one of the sentinels.

"From Balgunter, this side Galway," said Phelim, "and, by the Holy! there's dozens making for the hills since they heard of your crossing the borders."

"Glory be to them, boys, and more luck to us," and the last drop passed from the black bottle; "and now we will pass you on to the camp," said one of the men. "Be gorra, you're two likely chaps, anyhow, just the sort to please Red Rory."

Phelim was near giving a start when he heard the name of Red Rory; he knew who Red Rory was right well, and he knew him by sight, but, on reflecting a little, he felt satisfied that he would not be likely to be recognised by a man who had not seen him since he was a boy of twelve or thirteen. The night Phelim and Andy joined the band in the gorge, several men had dropped in from various parts, so that their joining created neither surprise nor remark. Phelim and Andy soon made themselves at home, the former got hold of a cracked fiddle, and what will not a fiddle do, even amongst Croppies? so that before the fifth day expired, Phelim made out who was held a prisoner in the old tower, and who was an inmate in the cottage.

"Andy," whispered Phelim, "we must get away to-morrow night. Hush! go to sleep." But the next day brought McCormac, and before night events occurred he little dreamed of.

CHAPTER XI.

Some days had passed since Norah O'More's interview with Roland McCormac and her miserable uncle, and no change had taken place in her situation. She saw no more of Lizzy; the old woman had grown more morose, and her dear little patient companion was beginning to pine. Norah's thoughts and reflections were painful to a degree. Sometimes when hope gave way she felt on the brink of despair, but her strong religious feelings in the end sustained and supported her.

On the fifth morning, about an hour after breakfast, at which her little charge, to her grief, had scarcely touched its food, she heard the tramp

of feet, followed by a loud authoritative knock at the door.

The old woman muttered something in a low voice, and then unbarred the door, and Roland McCormac hastily entered the room; he was followed by a man whom Norah, whose heart beat violently, knew to be a priest,—but what a wretched object to designate as a minister of religion! He was one of those outcasts from the Roman Catholic church, expelled for intemperance and debauchery; but, nevertheless, he contrived to find customers, who required his assistance amongst the rebel bands.

This drunken wretch encouraged their madness, and gave them absolution for massacring heretics. One of the same sort, called Murphy, commanded a body of rebels at Onlait, in the county of Wexford.

"Well, madam," said Roland McCormac, in a coarse, light tone, "have you had time sufficient to make up your mind? Let this priest unite us, and I pledge you my honour to release Captain

O'More and that child, and they shall be escorted to a place of safety. Refuse me again, and by —— I hang them."

Norah's eyes were raised, and her pale lips uttered a prayer to heaven for support, and then said,—

"I trust myself to the protection of Heaven. No consent to be your wife shall ever pass my lips. You have my answer, and take care how you outrage that God, before whose tribunal you may stand before another hour passes. And you, miserable, degraded wretch," she added, fixing her fine and penetrating eyes upon the priest, whilst McCormac spoke to a man at the door, "how dare you give your services to this man of blood? are you not afraid the Almighty will strike you dead at my feet for your monstrous impiety and wickedness?"

"My dear young lady," returned the priest, already half intoxicated, "this is not the age for miracles. My business is to make people happy."

Roland McCormac turned from the door, and with a face inflamed with passion, said:—"Now, madam, you shall learn how Roland McCormac keeps his word; we will try your boasted pride and resolution," and he took her by the arm, the child shrieking wildly as he clung to the distracted Norah's neck, but the indignant girl burst from McCormac's grasp, and clasping the child to her heart, she passed out from the hut.

For several moments she could not see; every object swam before her sight, but collecting all her energies, she drew herself up, and cast a glance around her; the sight that did meet her anxious glance was one never totally forgotten in the long after years of her life. She perceived that she was completely surrounded by fifty or sixty armed rebels, resting their muskets and pikes upon the ground, and fixing their fierce and glaring eyes upon her and the horrified child.

In front of her was the blasted oak tree, with the two or three leafless limbs branching forth

from the sapless trunk. Close to this tree, from a strong branch of which hung a stout rope with a loop in it, stood Roland McCormac's ferocious lieutenant, Rory the Red, a man of immense stature, and whose countenance was disfigured by scars; a deep seam from the left eye, dividing the upper lip, reached to the chin; this deep and livid scar gave a frightful look of ferocity to this notorious butcher of his species.

Our heroine became nearly paralysed with despair, as the ranks opened, and four men were seen dragging Magnus O'More along; placing him beneath the branch, from which hung the rope, they held him there. He was firmly bound with cords.

"Now, madam," said Roland McCormac, "we come to the point; your answer decides the fate of yonder prisoner."

Magnus O'More's tall and commanding form never looked, even with his hands bound behind his back, more grand and dignified than at that trying moment of his life. His eyes were bright

and defying as they met his mortal enemy's glance, and then as they rested upon the almost frenzied Norah, such a fond and beseeching look of devotion met hers, that her tears fell unchecked, whilst her sobs, as she drew her breath with difficulty, were audible to all. But, before she could utter a word, the clear trumpet tones of O'More's voice startled all, and a dead silence ensued.

"Norah, Norah," said the young commander, "let no fear of seeing me die sully your pure lips with an assent to wed so atrocious a villain as Roland McCormac,—I can die thus, with hand unstained, as well as amidst a gallant strife; but I implore you, let me die with the conviction that you utterly spurn and execrate the cowardly ruffian who has dared to breathe so foul and unnatural a request."

"Die, then, Roderick O'More!" furiously exclaimed McCormac, stamping with rage; "and know, proud fool, that Norah O'More will be mine, nevertheless! Up with him!"

A wild, fearful shriek escaped Norah's lips; at the same moment the report of a musket rung through the air, and, with a wild cry of agony, Roland McCormac sprung into the air, and then rolled over on the ground, mortally wounded, and writhing in agony.

All present were appalled, and O'More, by a mighty effort, burst his bonds, and the next instant clasped the fainting Norah and the child—whose screams rent the air—in his arms; a body of men rushed in furious rage to cut them to pieces, but McCormac,—though he knew he was mortally wounded, gasping, screamed out,

"Touch them not—let them be. Oh, curse the villain!" and he writhed in agony, though making a terrible effort, he tried to conceal his agony, and to persuade his men he was only severely wounded. "Where is the villain,—the accursed villain who fired that shot?"

Six men dragged forward the tall form of Phelim McFarlane. McCormac, after swallowing some brandy, though still gasping, glared at Mc

Farlane, whilst O'More, holding up the form of Norah and the child, gazed at his faithful follower with deep emotion; he was guarded by twenty men with their pikes extended towards him.

"Who are you?" gasped out McCormac. "Cursed villain! why did you dare to shoot me down?"

"Blow me, if that ain't cool," said Phelim, perfectly collected, and his eyes fixed upon McCormac. "Why man, if I was not held as I am, I'd hammer your cursed head to splinters on yonder rock. I'm Phelim McFarlane, if you want to know who I am, and there's my master. Now, villain, do your worst. Blow me if I hav'nt stopped your log, and no mistake! and now, boys," he added, turning to the men, "if you are wise, you won't commit a useless murder." Rory the Red was bending down and listening to what McCormac said; he then placed him against a rock, and, forming the men into a compact body, desired them to force Magnus O'More, McFar-

lane, the lady and child into the cottage. It was utterly in vain to resist,—with several slight thrusts from their pikes in shielding Norah they were all forced inside the cottage, and the door shut and locked.

"Oh, Magnus!" exclaimed Norah, sinking exhausted on the bench, "what will become of us? Oh, my God! spare me such another scene of horror!"

"Don't give way, Miss Norah; please God we will get away yet," said Phelim, as O'More strove to calm her and the child. "The dragoons and the foot soldiers ought to have been here three hours ago—what has happened to Andy Groggan, I can't imagine."

But all in the cottage were now attracted by what was going on outside; masses of rock were piled against the door, and dozens of men were bringing heaps of dry furze and dry wood, and piling them all round the cottage, and then with a wild and frightful yell, these combustibles were set fire to in several places.

The bold heart of Magnus for a moment ceased to beat,—he gazed at Norah, who started wildly to her feet, as the cracking flames made themselves distinctly to be heard; the dry thatch burnt like tinder, and the flames in a few seconds thrust their scorching tongues through the little windo ws, and ever and anon the shrieks and yells of the savag es without testified to their horrible exultation as they heaped on more combustibles. It they could even have forced their way out they would have been mangled by pikes and tossed back into the flames.

Norah understood it all too well; she fell upon her knees, buried her face in her hands, and if ever prayers from a pure and pious heart reached the throne of grace, hers did as she clearly and distinctly prayed for them all.

Phelim, pale but unsubdued, crossed himself and gazed in admiration at the fair form before him, on whom already the fiery sparks fell from the burning thatch. A few minutes more and the blazing mass would smother them, and shroud them in its fiery embrace.

O'More stood appalled, when suddenly Norah started from her knees, exclaiming,

"Oh, blessed Lord! I had forgotten; pull away the bed"—they had retreated into the adjoining room—"Pull away the bed, there are vaults beneath for hiding stills and kegs of whisky."

A cracked rafter and a heap of burning straw fell into the room, and a wild yell without foretold their approaching doom. Like madmen O'More and Phelim dashed the bed aside, tore away the earth, and, seizing a ring, lifted a huge trap door.

"God is good," exclaimed Magnus O'More, as, lifting up Norah and the child, he lowered them into the vault, which appeared six or eight feet deep, and then he and Phelim springing down, let the trap fall over them, as the whole mass of burning roof, rafters, and thatch, filled the room with a sheet of flame.

The intense darkness in the vault, for a moment, bewildered the fugitives, but Captain O'More, supporting Norah and the terrified

child, hearing the crackling and roaring of the flames, and not knowing how soon they might catch the timber of the trap door,—though in point of fact there was no fear of that, for the entire roof of half-consumed thatch fell over it, and lay smouldering without coming to a blaze—desired Phelim to grope about and ascertain the extent of the place.

"How, dearest girl, did you discover this retreat, and remember it at so providential a moment?"

"The young woman named Lizzy, the wife, I believe, of that fearful man, Rory the Red, told me that the cottage was once a great place for making whiskey, and that there were vaults under the rooms for holding all the tubs and the spirit. But listen; Phelim is calling out."

They listened, and then they heard Phelim say,

"Come this way, sir, quick; I can see daylight."

"Thank God!" exclaimed O'More, taking the

child, "there's evidently a way out of this place. Mind, Norah, there are lots of casks and barrels scattered about; grope along the sides.

"Take care, sir," said Phelim, returning, "there's a strong stream of water running through these caves, when you advance some fifty or sixty yards. I came back to take the child, whilst you help Miss O'More down a steep ledge of rocks. The water comes in between this ridge."

"How deep is the water, Phelim?"

"Not knee deep at the worst, sir; I can see from the ledge of rock a faint light a-head."

"I must carry you, Norah, through the water," said the Captain to his cousin.

"No, no; I do not mind the water; I can walk through it very well. Such trifles are not to be heeded after our providential escape from a fearful death."

"Mind, Phelim," said our hero, "when you gain the outlet of these caves, how you show yourself. We shall still be very close to the camp of the rebels."

"The military must surely be up by this time, sir; it's a rascally shame that they were not here before. Your lives would have been sacrificed but for Miss Norah's sudden thought. Be gor, if I could only have shot that big villain, Rory the Red, and made Lizzy a widow, I'd be content."

"We shall never forget the shot you did fire, Phelim," said Norah. "All would have been lost but for that bold shot."

"It was neck or nothing, miss. Faix, I never was in such a fix. To see the master, with both hands bound, and the villains threatening to hang him. The Lord save us! I felt as if I was burning inside. But here's the ridge of rocks, sir; you can hear the stream gushing out, and running down along the bottom of the cavern."

The descent of the rocks was about twelve or fourteen feet, and the water, as our hero put his feet into it, felt of extraordinary coldness.

"This will never do, Norah; you could not

bear the cold; the water is like ice. Will you let Phelim carry you, Francis, darling," continued O'More, to the poor child, who was shivering.

"Yes, papa, if you will carry my dear Norah."

Norah tried to resist. She put her hand in the water; it was intensely cold, and fearing she might lose the use of her feet, and thus retard their escape, she consented. O'More lifted her into his arms, little Francis clung to Phelim, who always loved children, and had so soft and engaging a way with them that at once they became free and joyous with him. Soothing little Francis, he picked his way over huge rocks, and stumbled out of deep places, warning his master, who followed; and in this manner they all made their way to the entrance to the cave.

Placing Norah and the child on a high and dry rock, Captain O'More and Phelim proceeded to take a view from the opening. Pushing aside a mass of tangled briars, they gazed out with some degree of curiosity from their retreat. The stream

of water they were standing in, and which made their feet like lumps of ice, fell from the outlet over a precipice of slippery crags, down upon a ledge of rock some thirty feet below them, and thus formed a most picturesque cascade, falling into a wild and rugged gorge. On the opposite side rose the steep hills, stretching away to the right, and leading to Benleve; below them a glimpse of the lake was obtained, through a thickly-wooded glen.

"The difficulty," said our hero to Phelim, "is to get down thirty or more feet to that ledge of rock; after that, I see, the descent is easy. Another thing to be considered is, shall we be recognised by the rebels above us?"

"I don't think we shall, sir, for the cabin stands in, and looks down into a different gorge."

"Is it not strange," observed Captain O'More, "that none of the rebels knew that the cottage stood over these caves?"

"They are almost all strangers to this country, sir. Faix, it's an ugly descent anyhow; but we

had better be moving whilst we have the use of our feet. Be dad, if this water just flowed over a volcano for half an hour it would improve it."

It was decided to lose no more time, but make a descent at once. Captain O'More had carefully reconnoitred it, so, Phelim taking the child, our hero partly carried and partly helped Norah down the declivity, which, fortunately, they accomplished without accident. Little Francis seemed wonderfully to revive after they left the vaults, Phelim having told him that he would see his dear mamma before night.

The object of the party was to gain the borders of the lake, and procure a boat.

"It's not more than three miles," said Phelim, to an enquiry from our hero.

"I shall think nothing of three miles," remarked Norah, "the walking will do us all good. Your feet must be perished, Magnus, standing so long in that icy water. Strange how intensely cold it is."

"Running so much underground, and being a high mountain spring," answered Magnus.

Before, however, they completed the descent of the mountain, it was getting rapidly dusk. Giving Norah his arm, they pursued their way towards the lake, the distance, as Phelim imagined, being only three or four miles, through a very wild and rugged country. The stream that fell from the hills, joined by several other small rills, was evidently forcing its way over all impediments into the lake, and along its borders they travelled. Poor Norah, without any covering for the head, or shawl, with her thin, soaked shoes, bore up wonderfully. Phelim carried the child, protecting him from the blast with the tails of his long frieze coat. Every now and then the little fellow would kiss his bronzed cheek, and tell him he liked him very much, and he would tell his dear mamma how kind he was to her little Francis.

"I fear you are suffering, Norah," said O'More, anxiously and tenderly. "This is, in truth, a rough, rugged path."

"No, indeed," returned the girl, as she leaned

on her lover's arm, "my heart is too full of thankfulness and happiness to feel anything but joy and gratitude. Shall we ever forget this day, dear Magnus?"

"No, beloved, no," he replied, pressing the little hand resting on his arm. "Those hours were a life—

"Hark! what was that," exclaimed Norah, pressing his arm closer to her. "Did you hear it?"

"I did," said our hero, casting a glance round. "It was a shrill and peculiar whistle; do not tremble, my own Norah, God would not have saved us at such a moment to let us perish in sight of refuge."

"Heave a head, sir, heave a head," said Phelim, as another and louder whistle sounded behind them, "we are pursued."

"My God!" sighed Norah, and she redoubled her speed.

"We are close to the shores of the lake, I am sure," said our hero, almost carrying Norah in a

run. Suddenly a bright flame shot up into the air from the side of the ravine, and then another on the other side, till at length the whole sides of the hill threw out bright jets of flame."

"It is very strange," said O'More, "I think the rebels must have discovered that we did not perish in the flames of the cottage. I see numbers of figures flitting across the fires."

Whilst our party is hurrying towards the lake, we will return to the scene in front of the burning cottage, and see how Roland McCormac discovered that his diabolical scheme of vengeance was frustrated.

CHAPTER XII.

Roland McCormac, though mortally wounded, was likely to live many hours. After the first torture, a deceitful lull of the agony he endured took place. Fearful was the conflict that raged in that bad and cruel man's heart; as he beheld his men heaping up the furze and wood, he felt only half satisfied; he wished to see the torture his victims endured; he could not even hear their shrieks.

"Tear down the door," he fiercely exclaimed to his equally savage lieutenant, who anxiously watched his captain's case, as he intended to succeed him in the command of the men. "Let

them come out, but be ready with your pikes to thrust them back into the flames."

Even the brutal ruffians who eagerly obeyed his orders wondered that not a shriek or a cry came from the burning cottage.

The door, half consumed, was torn down; the room was on fire inside, but no cry of agony or despair was heard.

"Is there any mode of escape from that infernal cottage?"

"Yes," answered a cracked voice close behind the captain.

"Curse you, who are you?" roared McCormac, trying to look round.

"It's my old mother," said Rory the Red.

"Bring her here. Well, you infernal old witch," exclaimed McCormac, gasping, and gazing at the old woman, "why didn't you say so before. How can they escape?"

The old woman seemed to care little for anybody. She was a miserable old heartless wretch, in fact, enjoyed seeing anybody disappointed.

"They must have got into the vaults where they used to keep the stills and the tubs. Lizzy must have told them; I didn't."

"Ha!" exclaimed McCormac, again feeling sick and in torture. "Pull away the burning thatch, and look for the vaults, they must be there still. Did you know of them, Rory McTagger?"

"No," returned the lieutenant, "I can't think how my wife knew of the vaults. I have heard say there was a still somewhere in the hills, but that the gagers had destroyed the place."

"Ferret them out," fiercely screamed the dying rebel. "Ah! fool that I was, not to have had them piked first, and then thrown into the flames afterwards. Curse them! they must be there still."

The rebels, in the meantime, half with the hope of finding some illicit whiskey stowed away, worked at the falling and blazing roof with their pikes and long poles, clearing the stones. This was a work of time, and just as they came to the

half-consumed trap, McCormac was near his end. Even in that hour, no single sign of repentance was to be seen.

"Are they there?" he screamed, writhing himself round.

The men held lighted brands down the cave. "No," they exclaimed, "they have got out somewhere."

Frantically cursing and hurling imprecations upon the fugitives, McCormac rolled over on his side, foamed at the mouth, tore up the sod in his frantic passion, and breathed his last with a curse upon his lips.

Rory the Red cast a look at the lifeless body of Roland McCormac, "Come, boys, there's no use lamenting our leader; I'll take his place. But let us see if we can't catch these runaways; I don't want to burn or kill them, but we can make them useful to us. We must not stop here, anyhow, but cross over into the county of Limerick, and join Fitzgerald. You see, the man and the woman and child must have got out through some

hole. Rats never burrow up hill; some of you go round into the other gorge."

"Faix," said one of the rebels, "may be they are in the hole still, hiding; it may be a large place."

"Well, let a dozen of you jump down; light a torch; it's not unlikely that you are right. And half-a-dozen of you lift up the captain and bury him."

The delay of hunting and examining the cave no doubt saved the fugitives, for had a party of them gone round the brow of the hill on which the cottage stood, they must have discovered them. A good deal of time was lost in the caves, for the men delayed for the purpose of examining the casks and barrels, hoping to find some full of whiskey, but no such luck followed.

"Tare and ouns! here's cold water," said the first rebel, as he stumbled into the stream, slipping over the ledge of rocks, and at once extinguishing the light.

"By the holy poker! they are not here, any-

where," cried the men, as they hastily scrambled back, not liking the dark, and feeling no inclination to examine further. So they scrambled out of the vault, and told Rory the Red that they must have escaped through a hole they saw at the extremity of the cave.

"Then up and be stirring. I'll have them yet; I owe that —— rascal, Phelim McFarlane, a knock on the head, for a cursed spy, as he was. We shall have the dragoons from Ballyturbot upon us, if we let him escape us. So light some fires upon the hills, it will warn Houlagan and his party, and they will join us."

Though Rory and about twenty others pursued the fugitives, the lights on the hills guided a party of royal troops, who had been in search of them since daybreak, to rescue Miss O'More. They had been misled by their guides, and taking a wrong gorge, got entangled amidst the wild defiles of the mountains. The royal troops were soon after engaged with the rebels.

By the sudden firing, the volleys of the royal

troops reaching their ears, and the equally sudden extinguishing of the fires, Magnus at once conjectured that the party Phelim expected had only then discovered the retreat of the rebels.

Just as the moon rose above the hills, the little party reached the borders of the lake. The moonbeams played upon its placid surface sweetly, the giant shadows of the hills throwing other parts of the surface into deep shadow; but just in the spot where the moon's rays fell, Phelim perceived a large fishing-boat, lying at anchor, some fifty or sixty yards from the shore.

"By the powers, sir! there's a boat!" said Phelim, "we are near some cottages."

And true enough, turning an angle of rock and a tuft of trees, they saw a small cottage. Approaching this dwelling, Phelim knocked; but no answer was returned. Repeated knocks met the same fate.

"By dad, there is no one here;" and putting his shoulder to the door, he burst it open.

"You can rest in here," said Captain O'More

to Norah. "The child is fast asleep. Phelim and I will get at yonder boat. It is very strange that there is no one in the cottage."

"I can strike a light," said Phelim, "I dare say I shall find the materials in some cupboard or other," and he commenced groping about. Finding a bench, he placed it for Norah, who took the child in her arms.

"Do not mind the light," said Norah, "I can sit here; but how can you get the boat, which is far out?"

"Oh, never fear, miss," answered Phelim, "I'll swim out for it; and by dad, here's a tinder-box and a lot of small candles. Come, more luck to us," murmured Phelim, "we shall have light at all events. A drop of whisky would not be a bad thing."

Phelim struck a match, and having lighted one of the candles, he held it up, so as to have a look round the room.

Norah, as objects became clear, looked curiously around her, when her gaze rested on a sight

that caused her to utter an exclamation of alarm, and then starting up, she ran frightened towards the door. O'More heard the cry—he was looking out towards the boat; but hearing Norah's voice, he turned and caught her in his arms.

"What has alarmed you?" exclaimed our hero.

The young girl shuddered, saying,

"Take me into the air, there's some one dead lying on the table."

Our hero led her out, as Phelim advanced towards the table, on which lay the dead body of a man. Phelim looked upon the features, but recognised no one that he knew; O'More entering the cabin, having left Norah without the door, let his gaze rest upon the dead.

"Faix, his log's run out, sir, and no mistake; but who is he?"

"I recognise him; but I guessed who it was before I looked at him. This wretch has met a merited doom. He lived as a domestic at Courtown Castle, and betrayed us into the hands of

the rebels. I knew he was wounded; his comrades brought him into this cabin, left him, and here he died; the owners of this hut are no doubt gone to seek help to bury him. You had better go, Phelim, and look out for the boat."

"Aye, aye, sir, they may bury him where they like, it's little matter where a traitor and a spy finds his last resting-place."

Captain O'More returned to Norah, who was sitting on a bench just outside the door, with little Francis, quite worn out, sleeping in her arms.

"Who is the unfortunate man?" questioned Norah.

O'More told her; the young girl sighed.

"I remember him well; Lady Courtown was very kind to him. It is sad to think what power gold has over the human heart."

Norah felt worn and greatly fatigued; the repeated shocks she had received during the last few days were beginning to tell on even her naturally strong and healthy frame.

"I will leave you, dear Norah," said her lover, tenderly, "but only for a moment, whilst Phelim and I secure the boat. You are not, I know, afraid of the dead."

"Dear Magnus!" interrupted Norah. "No, his power for good or evil is gone; he can create no other feeling than pity—grief if he died doing good, and sorrow that death claimed him whilst commiting evil."

On joining Phelim Magnus perceived his follower stripping off his jacket and shoes, for the boat lay anchored some fifty yards off in deep water. Phelim plunged in, and soon gained the boat, but as he did so, and raised himself over the stern, the report of two or three muskets rung through the air.

"Quick, Phelim," shouted our hero, as he turned back towards Norah. He saw the splash the balls made in the water close to the boat, and he judged that they were fired from a height at Phelim.

"Ah!" muttered Phelim. "You're there, are

you? bad cess to you;" and casting off the cable, he sculled the boat ashore.

"Merciful Providence," cried Norah, springing to her feet as her lover joined her. "They are close after us."

"Give me the child, dearest, and let us get to the boat." Catching the still sleeping boy in his arms, our hero hurried Norah to the boat. Wading into the water, he gave the child to Phelim, and then taking Norah in his arms, he again waded in and placed her in the stern sheets, and began applying his great strength to shove the boat off. Just then six or eight men crashed through the branches of the wood, uttering the most fearful oaths and imprecations, and threatening them with a fearful death. Already had O'More and Phelim pushed the boat afloat, when Rory the Red dashed into the water, firing his pistol within a yard of Magnus O'More's head, scorching his neck with the flash, but the ball only grazed the skin. Seizing the heavy iron tiller of the boat, O'More turned and, with a

tremendous blow, smote Rory on the skull. This single blow finished the career of the ferocious rebel.

As our hero sprung into the boat, Phelim, with a cheer of defiance, pushed into deep water, smiting the nearest rebel a blow with his oar, and stretching him beside his comrade, just as a dozen or more of the same band burst through the wood, firing their muskets at the boat, with savage yells of fury, and disappointed vengeance. A faint cry escaped Norah's lips—a ball had grazed the flesh on the arm that encircled the now awakened and terrified boy. O'More felt he had a musket ball in his left shoulder, but hearing the suppressed cry of his beloved Norah, he dropped his oar, and stooping over her, said, his voice trembling with emotion, "My God, you are hurt, Norah!"

"It's nothing, Magnus; Providence has mercifully shielded us; it's a mere flesh wound on the arm above the elbow."

Tearing off his neckerchief, he bound it tightly round the wound, to stop the bleeding.

"Thank God, my own Norah; it's nothing but a skin wound, but what an escape. Ah, we shall not forget this night in a hurry."

"No, Magnus; nor the Almighty hand that shielded us; but good heaven, the blood is running down your sleeve all over my dress. Oh, Magnus, Magnus, you are desperately wounded," and she clasped his hand in hers, trembling with terror.

"A mere ounce of bad lead in my left shoulder, dear Norah; not a very unusual occurrence with us sailors," and kissing little Francis, who threw his arms round his neck, crying out, "Oh, my! oh, my! they have hurt you, papa, and you too, my own Norah. What shall we do? What will dear mamma say?"

"She will cry for joy when she gets her little Francis in her arms again," said Norah.

Phelim had set the sail to the breeze blowing

down the lake; he now came aft, quite unconscious that Miss O'More or our hero had been wounded. His rage was great, but finding that both our hero and heroine made light of their hurts, he took little Francis in his arms and covered him up with his jacket. O'More steered the boat before the wind, conversing with Norah in a low tone, talking of the past, and venturing to dream of happy days in the future, after all they had gone through.

"Faix, sir," observed Phelim, having coaxed Francis to sleep. "You have done my cousin Lizzy a good turn anyhow."

"How's that, Phelim?"

"Bedad, by making her a widow; for faix, Master Rory the Red has a hole in his skull you could put a loaf into."

"I hope poor Lizzy won't take it to heart," said Norah. "He was a terrible savage."

"By the powers, Miss Norah, you may depend on it, she'll keep this same iron tiller, that crushed in his ugly head like an egg-shell, as a

pleasing remembrance to enliven her widowhood."

"But, Phelim," questioned Norah, "how came your cousin Lizzy, a quiet, nice, pretty girl, to marry such a terrible man as Rory?"

"Oh, faix, Miss Norah, asking your pardon, there's no accounting for taste, the least in the world."

"Lizzy shall not be forgotten," said Norah, "only for her having mentioned the vault under the floor of the cabin, we should, alas! have all perished. It was God's mercy that inspired her."

"What was this redoubtable Rory the Red before he joined the rebel band in the mountains?" questioned Captain O'More.

"Faix, he was a sodger, your honour, and wore a red coat; and six years ago, they say, he was as strapping and fine looking a fellow, in spite of his foxy head, as any in the regiment, though he had the character of being a wild, harum-scarum sort of chap. He picked up an acquaintance with my

cousin Lizzy whilst she was staying with my aunt in Limerick, and, bedad, she was fool enough to marry him. Some time afterwards, for some devilment or other, and striking his sergeant, he got flogged; two days after this, he watched his opportunity, and shot the sergeant dead, and, though he was hotly pursued, faix, he got away and fled into the mountains. Lizzy heard no more of him for a long time, but he contrived not only to let her know where he was, but coaxed her to join him, and then they both took up their quarters with the rebels, where he soon acquired the name of Rory the Red. Red-headed and red-handed he was, and no mistake; a sweep of a dragoon sabre spoiled his beauty, and your honour finished him with that tiller; so Lizzy is free, and faix, I hope wiser."

"But how will she get away from those terrible men if they find out that we escaped through her information? God help the poor thing, they may wreak their vengeance upon her."

"It's not likely that they will find that out."

"What misery that unhappy wretch George Hamilton has caused," remarked Norah. "Did you see him, Magnus, whilst a prisoner amongst them?"

"I saw him," returned our hero, "on the morning I was led out from the tower, lying hopelessly drunk on the steps. As I stepped over him, with a feeling of horror, he glared at me, without the slightest remorse or pity in his senseless glance, though he knew me."

"Ah!" said Norah, "will he die thus, steeped in crime! What a career that man has led. To his baneful counsels you, dear Magnus, owed all your sufferings in your tender years; for I devoutly believe that my father, left to his own judgment, without that tempter ever at his side, would never have acted as he has done."

Magnus O'More pressed the small hand that rested in his.

On glided the boat, running before the gentle night breeze which scarcely ruffled the lake's sur-

face, the moon beams falling with a silvery light over the sparkling waters, except where the long shadows of the high hills fell across the moon's rays. The night cries of the numerous water fowl came pleasingly on the ear, as the boat cut her noiseless way through the water. The young couple were for a few moments silent, busy with their own thoughts—Phelim minding the sleeping boy, and occasionally casting a look a-head, till the turn in the lake should reveal the wooded slope and the turrets of Courtown castle.

As the moon set, and the early dawn struggled for mastery with the last rays, Courtown castle became visible in the grey light of early morn.

"There will be joy within those walls, Norah, in another hour," said O'More, giving the boat a shove in for the little quay, so well remembered as the spot where he had landed with Norah in his arms, after rescuing her from an early death.

The boat ran rapidly in and alongside the quay, and Phelim, consigning the then awakened boy to O'More's arms, leaped out and secured the boat.

By this time Norah's arm had become exceedingly sore and painful, whilst our hero's left arm was stiff, and any movement distressing. All left the boat, little Francis, rejoicing to get upon land, ran on before, longing to be received into the arms of his beloved mamma. It was broad daylight, and as they came in sight of the castle, some early domestic perceived them, and immediately lights flashed from the windows, and by the time they reached the house, half the servants in the establishment were up, dressed, and rushing about, spreading the news of their arrival, hastening out to meet them, and overwhelming them with heart-felt congratulations. The young heir of Courtown had received many caresses, ere his mother, only half-dressed, in a state of intense excitement clasped him in her arms and half stifled him with kisses, the tears of joy and gratitude streaming down her cheeks. Then came Francis's nurse, in very scanty attire, wild with joy, and heedless of all save the sight of her precious charge. Most fortunately, Doctor

Sullivan was sleeping at Courtown castle, attending upon her ladyship; awakened by the noise and clatter of many tongues, and the cheers of the men, the doctor sprung out of bed, perfectly persuaded that the castle was attacked by rebels; he seized a brace of pistols, and, quite heedless of his toilet, rushed out on the stairs, coming full tilt against the worthy lawyer, also bewildered by the uproar; down went the doctor with the shock, for the lawyer was a heavy man, and, to his exceeding vexation, rolled down the stairs, amongst the astonished women, who were crowding the hall.

"Oh, doctor!" exclaimed Mrs. Patterson, the housekeeper, "You have forgotten your ——, here's a petticoat."

"Bless me!" exclaimed the doctor, tying on the petticoat with great deliberation, and gazing round him, quite heedless of the laughing housemaids.

"I hope you're not hurt," said Mr. Gordon,

coming to his side, "by Jove, you nearly knocked the breath out of me."

Just then Captain O'More came out from the dining-room, where he had left Lady Courtown, Norah, the child, and the nurse. Mr Gordon grasped his hand with an exclamation of joy, expressing his great delight at seeing him, and asking if Miss Norah and the child were safe.

"Safe and well, thank God," returned our hero, gazing, with a smile upon his face, at the worthy doctor. "Why, Sullivan, where did you pass the night? you are in a strange rig; but you are wanted this moment, to dress Miss O'More's arm, a musket ball has grazed and raised something more than the skin?"

"God bless me! how lucky, I mean how fortunate, that I slept here last night. I will change my rig, as you call it, in a minute."

"Make haste, then," returned our hero, "for I have also an ounce of lead in my shoulder keeping for you."

"That's serious," said the doctor, pausing, "I will have that out first."

"Not a bit of it," returned Captain O'More, "it's quite safe where it is, and I know you like a tit-bit of that kind."

"Just like you salt-water gentry; by Jove, you think no more of a lump of nasty lead in the carcase, than a landsman would of a pill. I'll be down in a minute." And in a very short time he reappeared with a box under his arm, and proceeded into the dining-room, where he most tenderly and skilfully dressed Norah's arm, telling her it would recover all its beauty before a month passed over. He then proceeded to Mr. Gordon's room, where he found our hero, prepared for the by no means pleasant operation of having a ball extracted.

"You have both had narrow escapes," said the doctor, skilfully preparing the way for his instrument laying hold of the ball. "Don't hurt you, I know," he continued.

"Well, upon my conscience," put in the law-

yer, who was holding the Captain's arm, "you are a pleasant fellow, Sullivan. 'It does not hurt you, I know!'"

"Hold your tongue. I don't give more pain with this nice pair of pinchers—by Jupiter, here it is—than you do your patients with a confounded long bill of costs in a chancery suit. How do you feel now, Captain? there's the enemy," holding the ball up, and looking at it with considerable complacency, "it was not so easy a job as you think."

"I can swear to that, Sullivan," returned our hero, laughing; "I can answer to the ease I feel. I wish we had as skilful surgeons aboard our ships as you, my old friend; though we can't complain either, for we have kind and skilful men, but not many of your experience."

In the meantime all the household had got into complete order, and preparations were made for a substantial breakfast. Phelim was in his glory; he was seated at a table in the servants' hall, before a roaring fire, a cold round of beef before him,

flanked by a huge jug of ale. A most anxious audience, male and female, surrounded him, intensely desirous of hearing all that had taken place, and everyone putting the question he was most anxious to have answered.

"Avast, messmates, and you, my beauties," began Phelim, cutting off a tolerable slice of the beef; "I'll answer all your questions soon. Be the powers of war! only fancy a fast of three days, to say nothing of the nights. Faix! it was hard work."

"Faith! it was," said the cook. "I never tried it longer than the one day, and then I had plenty of fish and eggs to keep me up. Bad cess to them rebels; they had just as well have shot you as starved you."

"Oh, be gor! I differ from you entirely, my darling," interrupted Phelim, taking a tremendous pull at the beer; "once youre' shot, faix! there's an end of your hunger; but tell me, Mr. Kinnaghan," turning to the butler, "where's Andy Groggan? when did he reach here?"

"Andy Groggan!" repeated the butler, "never came here at all. Deuce a one of us ever saw Andy Groggan. What was he coming here for?"

"Bother!" muttered Phelim, heaving a sigh, as he finished the contents of the jug, "how's that? Who told you then that we were prisoners to the rebels at Dunlen."

"Faith! we never heard a word about it; never knew it was with the rebels you were. We heard," continued the butler, "that a regiment of soldiers and a party of dragoons left Galway to hunt out the rebels near Ballytested, but of Andy Groggan we never heard a word."

Before many words more were uttered an exclamation from the kitchen attracted Phelim's attention.

"Bedad! that's Andy's voice, or I'm not Phelim McFarlane," exclaimed the sailor, jumping up and rushing out into the kitchen, followed by most of the other domestics, and there stood Andy Groggan twirling his hat in his hand, and

looking remarkably sheepish. He, however, grasped Phelim's hand and welcomed him out of that devils' den, as he called the rebel camp, heartily.

"Why, how the dickens, Andy," exclaimed Phelim, "is it that you only make your appearance here now? Faix! we might all be hanged, or our throats cut, if we depended on you. You topped your boom, and the devil a more you thought of us."

"Be gor! Phelim," said Andy, with a quiet smile, "after all ye wor not so near hanging as I was, and if ever I turn rebel again, I hope—"

"Whist!" said Phelim, "bother! you're talking nonsense now. I am sure you'd let yourself be hanged twice to save a hair of Miss Norah's head from being touched."

"True for you there, anyhow," said Andy,

"Well, come and have a jug of beer, with a drop of whisky in it, and tell us all about it; we had a rough time of it, but thanks be to

Providence here we are all right, safely anchored in port."

Phelim made Andy sit down in the servants' hall, and those who could stay loitered to hear the account he gave of himself.

Having taken a good pull at the beer jug, Andy became eloquent; but we must briefly sum up his adventures. He contrived to get clear of the rebel camp during the night, intending to find some place where he could get rid of his rebel costume, but just as he was clearing a hedge, it being then broad day, he came into the midst of a party of soldiers tracking a party of rebels. Unfortunately, Andy, forgetting that he was only a rebel in outward appearance, turned to run, till a musket shot within an inch of his head, brought him to his recollection, and putting on a bold face he advanced into the midst of the soldiers, who at once seized and handcuffed him, notwithstanding all his persuasions and attempts to explain mat-

ters. The soldiers were part of an English infantry regiment, and they laughed at him, telling him he would have no time to think about his mishap, and that they would make short work of it when they reached their quarters ; and, in truth, poor Andy was condemned to be shot instanter,—nobody paying the slightest attention to his distracted appeals for mercy, and his protestations that the King never had a more loyal subject than Andy Groggan.

Just as they were leading him out to be shot, who should ride into the barrack-yard but Captain Thurlow, just then returned from a visit of enquiry at Courtown Castle, where he had heard the tidings of the missing child, and of Captain O'More and Miss O'More. The captain enquired what they were going to shoot or hang the man for.

Andy, who remembered the captain, roared out, "Plase your Honour, captain, they are going to murder me, for turning rebel to save the young

lord and Miss Norah;—be Gor, it's too bad to die like a dog, when I risked soul and body to save heretics—God bless them, anyhow!"

Captain Thurlow ordered Andy to be released till he could hear his story; on learning the facts, he believed every word poor Andy said, and praised him highly for his courage and fidelity; and at once, seeing there was little time to lose, ordered his men to prepare for a rapid march back to the hills, taking Andy Groggan with them as a guide. Poor Andy was thus forced to run a double risk, for the soldiers fell in with the rebels, and, after a sharp conflict, killed many of them, and dispersed the rest.

"Oh," said Andy, in relating this to Phelim, "when I heard the bullets whistling within a hair's breadth of my head, bedad, I gave myself up for lost, and then a party of those cut-throat rebels charged us with pikes to force their way through, and one, omadhoun, who recognised me with the sodgers, gave a frightful yell and drove his pike at me,—an' here I threw

myself flat, and the pike went slap into Corporal Jones' chist. Faix! I thought he was kilt, but, bedad, it struck his canteen, which got round to the front, and all the harm he had was a fall, whilst the rebel's skull was smashed in by half-a-dozen musket butts. When all was over, the captain says, 'Andy, you're a brave boy; here's a guinea for you. Go home, and never think of turning rebel again.' 'Faix, your honour,' says I; 'there's no fear the least in the world of my ever becoming either a rebel or a sodger—I've escaped shooting and hanging, and having a pike in my stomach, and, be Gor! I've had enough of the wars. I'll drink your honour's health in a quart of whisky, and long life to you.' So I made my bow, when we came to Enesty, and took meself home, till I heard of your safe return with the child and Miss Norah, and that fine brave Captain O'More; here's 'long life and glory to them!'" and down went about a quart of good ale.

"Be the Pipers, Andy, you're a broth of a boy,"

said Phelim; "but you're a peaceable creature, and I advise you if there's any more fighting to be done, to send your wife—you know what I mane,—and be Gor! she'll do the fighting for you whilst you nurse the gossoons."

About a month after the events recorded in our preceding pages, Miss O'More, as well as our hero, had completely recovered from the effects of their wounds and the sufferings they had endured.

Francis Lord Courtown was as lively as ever, and was immensely pleased with Phelim McFarlane, for whom he evinced a great liking.

Mr. Gordon, by Captain O'More and Norah's ardent wishes, was again induced to visit Mr. O'More, who sternly refused to see or let his daughter enter his house, and offer him the most generous terms. But all overtures on the part of Captain O'More were listened to with scorn and indifference, and flatly refused,—he would accept no gift from his acknowledged nephew; he refused to see his daughter, but he made no opposition to her marriage with Captain O'More,

—Norah relinquished all claim to the fortune left her by her godfather.

The family were packing up to leave Ashgrove, and retire to England, which they did before the second month after Captain O'More's claims were fully established.

Some four months after Norah became the bride of Captain O'More, and thus, to the intense joy of the tenantry and the surrounding gentry, became the mistress of Ashgrove. Eight months after his marriage Captain O'More hoisted his flag on board the Phœbe, one of the finest frigates in his Majesty's service. Phelim McFarlane, though married to the pretty Kathleen Groggan, accompanied his loved commander, who had bestowed upon him a good farm, adjoining his delighted father's, to which was added a munificent gift from the grateful Lady Courtown.

Before leaving Ireland, Captain O'More learnt the fate of the wretched George Hamilton, up to that time a mystery.

Some countrymen, in traversing the Benlevy

mountains, found the body of a man, jammed between two immense masses of rock, both legs broken ; the body was dressed in the rebel uniform, and from articles found about the person, was recognised as that of George Hamilton. It was supposed that in flying from the royal troops during the night, he fell from the lofty heights over where the body lay jammed, and there perished—a miserable death.

Sir James Boriden did not die of his wound; he recovered, and became a wiser and a better man, and before leaving Ireland, wrote a most gentlemanly letter to Captain O'More, acknowledging that he richly merited the sufferings he had endured.

In the year 1801, Captain O'More, commanding the 36-gun frigate, the Phœbe, which was cruizing to the eastward of Gibraltar, and beating up against westerly breezes for that port, when a strange sail was observed close in with the African shore, steering directly up the Mediterranean.

The Phœbe was at that time with her head

to the northward. She immediately tacked, and stood after the stranger, who was just then abreast of the fortress of Ceuta. Our hero had only left Ashgrove a fortnight, and had shifted his flag to the Phœbe, and sailed from Plymouth; he was then the father of two fine children, and though his beautiful Norah sighed, seeing his determined resolution to continue to serve his majesty as long as a war with France continued, she bore up with a high heart and cheerful spirit, and bade him farewell with the courage of a heroine. Phelim McFarlane was the commander's coxswain; they had fought several actions, taken several prizes, and still carried their previous good fortune with them, escaping without a wound. The first lieutenant of the Phœbe was a most spirited and gallant gentleman, of the name of Hollands. The commander and his lieutenant were walking the quarter deck, every moment bringing their glasses upon the stranger, who was carrying a great press of sail.

"That is a large frigate, sir," said Mr Hol-

lands to his commander, "and apparently full of men. We gain on her fast."

"I see we do," returned Captain O'More, "but it will be dark night before we close with our chase."

It was in truth between seven and eight before the Phœbe, by her superior sailing came up with the strange frigate, and closed upon her larboard quarter.

The chased seeing flight futile, and an action inevitable, immediately shortened sail. Captain O'More, finding it impossible to discern the stranger's colours, also shortened sail, and ordered a gun to be fired over her to induce her to bring to.

The frigate thus appealed to, was a remarkably fine ship, in fact the 44-gun frigate, Africaine, commanded by Commodore Saulnier. At this time she had on board four hundred troops, several brass field pieces, and several thousand stands of arms.

The Africaine, immediately after the fire from the Phœbe, altered her course, and, as

quickly as possible, discharged a broadside at the English frigate. The Phœbe, however kept closing without firing a shot, till quite close, and running parallel with her antagonist, and then poured a most destructive, as it was afterwards ascertained, broadside into her, the two ships being within pistol-shot of each other, and running before the increasing breeze, and in the darkness of the night, continued a most hotly-contested engagement for more than two hours. Captain O'More could perceive through his night-glass that the French frigate was nearly unrigged, and that the Phœbe was also desperately cut up. Up to that time he had only one seaman killed, though he grieved to see his first lieutenant, Wentworth Hollands, rather severely wounded; still the gallant seaman would not leave the deck. The British frigate was rather short-handed, having only two hundred and forty men and boys on board, seven or eight men having been sent off in a captured brig, and eight or ten being also on board another.

Just as the Phœbe was about to renew the contest, the Africaine struck her colours. Thus this extraordinary engagement between two equal frigates, as far as guns and weight of metal went, ended in the Phœbe having one man killed, the first lieutenant and the master wounded, and twelve men, more or less severely.

When the loss of the Africaine became known, Captain O'More was grieved; the Frenchman fought his ship most gallantly, but his decks were lumbered and crowded with troops, who gallantly, but uselessly, maintained their station upon deck, firing their muskets incessantly, but without effect.

The loss of life was fearful. Out of a crew of seaman and troops amounting to seven hundred and eighteen, her commander, one brigadier-general, two captains in the army, three surgeons, killed in the cock-pit whilst dressing the wounded, were dead, besides one hundred and eighty-five seamen, marines, &c., making altogether one hundred killed, and one hundred and

forty wounded, many mortally ; and this fearful destruction of life arose from the tremendous searching broadsides of the Phœbe.

As soon as daylight made, Captain O'More proceeded on board the Africaine with his surgeons, most anxious to afford assistance. There were two or three French officers pacing the deck in great excitement. One of them, looking over the side, gazed for a moment into the face of Captain O'More, who, with his coxswain McFarlane, was about to ascend the side. Grinding his teeth with rage, he uttered a fearful oath, and rushed from the spot.

Captain O'More ascended the side, closely followed by Phelim, and stood shocked and amazed at the frightful scene the decks of the frigate presented, but before he could be addressed by the French officers advancing, an officer pushed through the group, and raising a pistol, fired full at Captain O'More's heart, exclaiming, in a voice hoarse with rage, "there, curse you, this is your last triumph." The ball entered

Captain O'More's breast, and without a groan, he fell senseless upon the deck.

With the cry of infuriated passion, Phelim, with his drawn cutlass, rushed at the assassin; vainly did the crowd try to stop him, his prodigious strength drove them before him; twice he plunged his cutlass through the body of Lieut. D'Allemarde, for he it was, and as he fell he caught him in his arms, and hurled him over the side.

All upon the deck of the Africaine stood appalled and amazed, Phelim McFarlane, his face haggard and distorted with rage, his long dark hair tossed wildly about his face and neck, glared like one deprived of reason upon those about him. None attempted to seize him, though he seemed bent upon some terrible deed, till Mr. Martin, one of the Phœbe's surgeons, came up, and laying hold of McFarlane's arm, said earnestly, "Thank God, Captain O'More is not mortally wounded; they are taking him to his own ship." Phelim, the devoted, stood immoveable, streams

of perspiration running down his cheeks, and his strong frame shaking as if in an ague, then, taking his cutlass, he flung it far into the sea, saying, "the blade that has killed an assassin shall never shed the blood of an honest tar."

The French officers were terribly shocked and grieved. Not a single man but felt that a cowardly disgraceful act had been committed, and they knew not for what; they had fought their ship most gallantly, more men could not do; their very superiority in numbers was against them, and only cumbered their decks with the dead and dying, making them slippery with the blood of the gallant dead.

As Phelim was proceeding to the gangway, men were bringing up the body of Lieut. D'Allemarde, with life still in him, though fearfully and mortally wounded. He did not die for several days, his principal thoughts and the few words he spoke evincing the utmost indifference for his own fate; but cursing the bungling shot that cost him his life, without destroying that of intended victim.

Placed in his own cabin, Phelim seated himself at the side of his couch, with his gaze riveted upon his master, who lay for twenty-eight hours without opening his eyes, his lips moistened by the coxswain; the ball had passed through the left breast and gone out under the right shoulder, without touching any vital part. It was a wonderful and providential escape, the third day he rallied, and was able to open his eyes, but not to move or speak.

In the meantime the two frigates were working to windward against heavy westerly breezes, the wounded in the prize suffering greatly. Mr. Wentworth Holland, though himself wounded, was constant in his attention to their situation, which was very embarrassing, for their masts and rigging were much cut up, and they had many prisoners. The fourth or fifth day, Captain O'More became quite conscious, and by signs to Phelim, requested the presence of Lieut. Hollands. The lieutenant, who was hourly at the side of his commander's couch, was soon at the bed-side; seeing that Captain O'More

could understand what he said, and evidently was anxious as to their position, the lieutenant explained their embarrassing situation. O'More's lips moved, and bending down his head, Lieut. Holland heard him say, "bear up for Minorca." This was immediately done, but unfortunately, coming within sight of Majorca, it fell slack calm, the Mediterranean taking one of those long sleeps it indulges in even in the depth of winter, so that it was nearly a fortnight after the action that the two frigates dropped their anchors in the fine harbour of Port Mahon.

By this time, the surgeons in the Phœbe had pronounced Captain O'More quite out of danger, but that several months, if not a year's retirement, would be absolutely necessary. The two frigates proceeded, after a refitting, for England, our hero just able to leave his couch on his arrival.

The officers aboard the Africaine were constant in their enquiries and attentions during Captain O'More's illness. The whole mystery of the at-

tempt at assassination was explained, and the officers of the Africaine were much gratified to know that the attempt proceeded from motives of private revenge, and was not in any way connected with feelings arising from the contest between the two frigates. On arriving in England the Africaine was purchased for the use of the British navy, and given the name of Amelia, under which title she often distinguished herself. Captain O'More was rewarded with the honour of knighthood, and his first lieutenant promoted to the rank of commander.

Still weak, and, at times, oppressed by his terrible wound, Captain O'More longed for the blessed peace and happiness of his loved home. The intelligence of his severe wound was carefully kept from the knowledge of his wife, who had passed a time of intense anxiety during his absence. When the frigate reached England a messenger with letters was at once despatched to Ashgrove, acquainting her with his arrival, and mentioned his having been wounded, but that he was then

getting quite well, and would be with her almost as soon as his letter.

The air of his native land sent a slight flush to the cheek of the invalid as he traversed the island from Dublin to Galway, accompanied by his devoted coxswain, so that when Norah received him in her loving embrace, she did not perceive, at a first glance, the ravages illness had made on his powerful frame.

1802 came, and peace was proclaimed; in a transport of joy Norah threw her arms round the neck of her husband, whilst she pointed to the three sweet faces of their children clinging to his side, "promise me, Magnus, that now peace is proclaimed, you will quit me no more. You have had honour and glory enough for man's ambition—live henceforth for your children and for me." The promise was given, and Norah henceforth knew no sorrow.

On the death of the Duke de Cabra, in 1803, Captain O'More became possessed of large es-

tates in Spain. With his beautiful Norah and his young son he visited Spain, was created Count de Cabra, and most graciously received by the king, to whom he did homage for his estates. The delight of the duchess was great; she was still hale and strong, and embraced his wife and child with true maternal fondness. On enquiry for Donna Maria he heard that her father was dead, and she herself the wife of an Italian prince, and then in Italy. We do not know whether our hero beheld the black-eyed Juana, but his fair wife left most handsome presents for her and her husband.

On returning to Ireland, Captain O'More was delighted on receiving a visit from his old and devoted friend Admiral O'Brien, his wife, and family. Many happy weeks were passed at Ashgrove by the two families so united in the bonds of friendship and love.

Captain O'More did not escape from the jokes of his laughter-loving friend, the gay admiral

bantering him on his flirtation with Donna Maria, and how he rescued him from the snares of the beautiful Spaniard.

Norah laughed at the heightened colour of her handsome husband. "I must be content I see, admiral," she said laughing, "with the remains of a heart terribly shattered in love and war. But, I think," turning to the admiral's very handsome wife, "you will agree with me that there was a pair of them."

"By Jove, Norah, you are right; but, after all, the needle always pointed true north, and the loadstone was here."

Looking over a file of old papers, we see a paragraph headed, "Marriage in high life." It was in the year 1822; and was celebrated at Courtown Castle. The beautiful and accomplished Norah O'More, daughter of Admiral O'More, of Ashgrove, was led to the altar by Francis Lord Courtown. The ceremony was followed by immense rejoicing, the master of the revels and the delight of the numerous tenantry

of both estates being Phelim McFarlane, the admiral's old coxswain, who never passed a day without seeing his beloved master, and blessing him and his in his heart of hearts. Bessy McFarlane never married; she became housekeeper of Ashgrove, and devoted herself to those she loved so well.

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